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VOL. IX.

Amphitryon, Double Dealer, Double Gallant, Inconstant, Constant Couple.

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AMPHITRYON.

OR, THE

TWO SOSIAS.

A

COMEDY,

Altered from DRYDEN,

By Mr. WOODWARD.

Marked with the Variations of the

MANAGER's BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. LOWNDES, T. CASLON,
C. CORBETT, AND S. BLADON,
M.DCC.LXXVII.

☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with single inverted Commas; as at Lines 2 to 4, in Page 20.

PREFACE.

THE abilities of DRYDEN as a writer, are so generally and so justly acknowledged to be of the first class, that it would be something worse than impropriety, to alter any of his productions without assigning the reason. For the alteration of his AMPHITRYON, indeed, the reason is evident; for it is so tainted with the profaneness and immodesty of the time in which he wrote, that the present time, however selfish and corrupt, has too much regard to external decorum, to permit the representation of it upon the stage, without drawing a veil, at least, over some part of its deformity: the principal part of the alterations, therefore, are made with a moral view; though some inaccuracies, which were remarked on the examination which these alterations made necessary, are also removed, of which the following are the chief.

In the scene between Sosia and Mercury in the second act, Amphitryon is supposed to have sent a buckle of diamonds by Sosia, as a present to Alcmena; for Sosia first asks Mercury "if Amphitryon did send a certain servant with a present to his wife;" and soon after asks him, "what that present was," which, by Mercury's answer, appears to be the diamond buckle: yet in the scene between Amphitryon and Alcmena, in the third act, when Alcmena asks him, as a proof of his having been with her before, from whose hands she had the jewel, he cries out, "This is amazing! have *I* already given you "those diamonds? *the present I reserved*——" And instead of supposing that Sosia had delivered

them as part of his errand, which he pretended he could not execute, he appeals to him for their being in safe custody, reserved to be presented by himself. This is an inconsistency peculiar to DRYDEN, for neither PLAUTUS nor MOLIERE any where mention the present to have been sent by Sosia.

There is another inaccuracy of the same kind, which occurs both in PLAUTUS and MOLIERE. It appears in the second act, that one part of Sosia's errand was to give Alcmena a particular account of the battle; and Sosia's account of his being prevented, is so extravagant and absurd that Amphitryon cannot believe it: yet when Alcmena, in the third act, asks Amphitryon how she came to know "what he had sent Sosia to "tell her," Amphitryon in astonishment seems to admit that she *could* know these particulars *only from himself*, and does not consider her question as a proof that Sosia had indeed delivered his message, though for some reasons he had pretended the contrary, and forged an incredible story to account for his neglect. As it would have been much more natural for Amphitryon, to have supposed that Sosia had told him a lie, than that Alcmena had, by a miracle, learnt what only he and Sosia could tell her, without seeing either of them; this inaccuracy is removed, by introducing such a supposition, and making the dialogue correspond with it.

In the second act, Jupiter, in the character of Amphitryon, leaves Alcmena with much reluctance, pretending haste to the camp, and great solicitude to keep his visit to her a secret from the Thebans: yet when he appears again in the third act, which he knew would be taken for the third appearance of Amphitryon, he does not account for his supposed second appearance at the return of the real Amphitryon, just after his departure,

parture, which seems to be absolutely necessary to maintain his borrowed character consistently; and without dropping the least hint of his being no longer solicitous to conceal his excursion from the camp, he sends Sosia to invite several of the citizens to dinner.

Many other inaccuracies less considerable, and less apparent, have been removed, which it is not necessary to point out: whoever shall think it worth while diligently to compare the play as it stood, with the altered copy, can scarce fail to see the reason of the alterations as they occur.

It must be confessed, that there are still many things in Amphitryon, which, though I did not obliterate, I would not have written; but I think none of these are exceptionable in a moral view. There are many passages in which Lord Amphitryon and Lady Alcmena are treated by their servants with a familiarity, which is not now allowed on the greater stage of the living world; and, indeed, from this fault, I scarce know any comedy that is perfectly free: however, some of the grosser freedoms that were taken by Phædra with the character of Judge Gripus, are rejected; and this was the more necessary, as Gripus was Alcmena's uncle; and, therefore, in her presence, could not, without the utmost impropriety, be enquired after of Amphitryon himself, as a wretch who had grown old in the abuse of his office as a magistrate, by selling justice, and swelling his purse with bribes.

If after all it be asked, why this play was altered at all, I answer, because it might otherwise have been revived, either by other managers, or at another house, without being altered, otherwise than by being maimed: some parts, indeed, would have been left out; but as nothing would have been substituted in the stead, it would have become imperfect, in proportion as it became

leſs vicious; and would ſtill have been ſo vicious in the very conſtituent parts, as to ſully, and, perhaps, corrupt almoſt every mind, before which it had been repreſented. But though I ſhould have been ſorry to ſee the joint work of PLAUTUS, MOLIERE, and DRYDEN, ſo mutilated, as to loſe that proportion of parts by which alone thoſe parts can conſtitute a whole; yet my principal view was effectually to prevent the exhibition of it in a condition, in which it could not be ſafely ſeen: and this, I hope, will be admitted as a ſufficient apology, (for my having thus employed ſome hours of that time which ſhall return no more) by thoſe who have little regard for AMPHITRYON as a piece of ancient humour, retouched and heightened by two of the moſt eminent maſters that modern times have produced.

PROLOGUE.

THIS night let busy man to pleasure spare:
Far hence be searching thought, and pining care;
Far hence whate'er can agonize the soul,
Grief, terror, rage, the dagger and the bowl!
The comic Muse, a gay propitious pow'r,
To dimpled laughter gives this mirthful hour.

The scenes which PLAUTUS *drew, to-night we shew*
Touch'd by MOLIERE, *by* DRYDEN *taught to glow.*
DRYDEN!—*in evil days his genius rose,*
When Wit and Decency were constant foes:
Wit then defil'd in manners and in mind,
Whene'er he sought to please disgrac'd mankind.
Freed from his faults, we bring him to the Fair;
And urge once more his claim to Beauty's care.
That thus we court your praise, is praise bestow'd;
Since all our virtue from your virtue flow'd.

But there are some——no matter where they sit—
Who smack their lips, and hope the luscious bit.
These claim regard, deny it they that can——
"The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman!"
Yet why apologize, tho' these complain;
They're free to all the rest of Drury-Lane.
To these bright rows we boast a kind intent;
We sought their plaudit, and their pleasure meant.
Yet not on what we give, our fame must rise;
In what we take away, our merit lies.
On no new force bestow'd we found our claim;
To make WIT HONEST, *was our only aim:*
If we succeed, some praise we boldly ask—
To make WIT HONEST *is no easy task.*

Dramatis Perſonæ.

M E N.

	At Drury Lane.	At Covent Garden.
Jupiter,	Mr. REDDISH.	Mr. LEWIS.
Amphitryon,	Mr. J. AIKIN.	Mr. WROUGHTON.
Mercury,	Mr. JEFFERSON.	Mr. LEE LEWES.
Gripus,	Mr. PARSONS.	Mr. QUICK.
Soſia,	Mr. KING.	Mr. WOODWARD.
Phœbus,	Mr.	Mr.
Polidas,	Mr.	Mr.
Tranio,	Mr.	Mr.
Plutus,	Mr. CHAMPNESS.	Mr. REINHOLD.

W O M E N.

Phædra,	Miſs POPE.	Mrs. MATTOCKS.
Alcmena,	Miſs YOUNGE.	Mrs. HARTLEY.
Bromia,	Mrs. BRADSHAW.	
Night,	Miſs PLATT.	
Wit		Miſs DAYES.

Scene, Thebes.

AMPHITRYON:

OR, THE

TWO SOSIAS.

ACT I.

Enter Mercury *and* Phœbus.

Phœb. KNOW you the reaſon of this preſent ſummons?
'Tis neither council-day, nor is this heaven:
What buſineſs has our Jupiter on earth?
Why more at Thebes than any other place?
And why are we, of all the Deities,
Selected out to meet him in conſult?
They call me God of Wiſdom; but the hind,
That whiſtling turns the furrow to my beams,
Knows full as much as I.

Merc. I have diſcharg'd my duty; which was to ſummon you, Phœbus: we ſhall know more anon; when the Thunderer comes down. 'Tis our part to obey our father; and here he is. [Jupiter *deſcends.*

Jup. No thoughts, not ev'n of Gods, are hid from Jove:
Your doubts are all before me; but my will,
In awful darkneſs wrapt, no eye can reach
'Till I withdraw the veil. Yet, thus far know,
That, for the good of human kind, this night
I ſhall beget a future Hercules;
Who ſhall redreſs the wrongs of injur'd mortals,
Shall conquer monſters, and reform the world.

Phœb. Some mortal we preſume of Cadmus' blood—
Some Theban beauty——

Jup. Yes, the fair Alcmena.
You two muſt be ſubſervient to my purpoſe.
Amphitryon, the brave Theban general,

Has overcome his country's foes in fight,
And in a single duel slain their king:
His conqu'ring troops are eager on their march,
Returning home; while their young general,
More eager to review his beauteous wife,
Posts on before, wing'd with impetuous love,
And, by to-morrow's dawn, will reach this town.

Phœb. Then how are we to be employ'd this evening?
Time's precious, and these summer nights are short;
I must be early up to light the world.

Jup. You shall not rise; there shall be no to-morrow.

Merc. Then the world's to be at an end, I find.

Phœb. Or else a gap in nature, of a day.

Jup. The night, if not restrain'd, too soon would pass;
Too soon the dawn would bring Amphitryon back,
Whose place I mean to hold: and sure a day,
One day will be well lost to busy man.
Night shall continue sleep, and care suspend:
So, many men shall live, and live in peace,
Whom sunshine had betray'd to envious sight,
And sight to sudden rage, and rage to death.

Phœb. I shall be curs'd by all the lab'ring trades,
That early rise: but you must be obey'd.

Jup. No matter for the cheating part of man;
They have a day's sin less to answer for.

Phœb. When wou'd you have me wake?

Jup. Your brother Mercury shall bring you word.

[*Exit* Phœbus.

[*To* Merc.] Here have I taken Amphitryon's form:
Thou must be Sosia, this Amphitryon's slave;
Who, all this night, is travelling to Thebes,
To tell Alcmena of her lord's approach,
And bring her joyful news of victory.

Merc. But why must I be Sosia?

Jup. Dull God of Wit, thou statue of thyself!
Thou must be Sosia, to keep out Sosia;
Whose entrance well might raise unruly noise,
And so distract Alcmena's tender soul,
She wou'd not meet, with equal warmth, my love.

Merc. Let me alone; I'll cudgel him away:
But I abhor so villainous a shape.

Jup.

Jup. Take it; I charge thee on thy duty, take it:
Nor dare to lay it down, till I command.
Night *appears above in a chariot.*
Look up; the Night is in her silent chariot,
And rolling just o'er Thebes: bid her drive slowly;
Or make a double turn about the world;
While I drop Jove, and take Amphitryon's form,
To be the greater, while I seem the less. [*Exit* Jup.

Merc. [*To* Night.] Madam Night, a good even to you! Fair and softly, I beseech you, madam: I have a word or two to you, from no less a God than Jupiter.

Night. O, my industrious and rhetorical friend, is it you? What makes you here upon earth at this unseasonable hour?

Merc. Why I'll tell you presently; but first let me sit down, for I'm confoundedly tired.

Night. Fy, Mercury! sure your tongue runs before your wit now: does it become a God, think you, to say that he's tired?

Merc. Why do you think the Gods are made of iron?

Night. No; but you should always keep up your Godship in your conversation, and leave to mankind the use of such vulgar words as derogate from the dignity of immortality.

Merc. Ay, 'tis fine talking, 'faith, in that easy chariot of yours: you have a brace of fine geldings before you, and have nothing to do but to touch the reins with your finger or thumb, throw yourself back in your seat, and enjoy your ride wherever you please: but 'tis not so with me: I, who am the messenger of the Gods, and traverse more ground both in heaven and earth than all of them put together, am, thanks to Fate, the only one that is not furnish'd with a vehicle.

Night. But if Fate has denied you a vehicle, she has bestowed wings upon your feet.

Merc. Yes, I thank her, that I might make the more haste; but does making more haste keep me from being tired, d'ye think?

Night. Well, but to the business: what have you to say to me?

Merc. Why, as I told you, I have a message from

Jupiter: it is his will and his pleasure, that you muffle up this part of the world in your dark mantle, somewhat longer than usual at this time of the year.

Night. Why what is to be done now?

Merc. Done! why he is this night to be the progenitor of a Demigod, who shall destroy monsters, humble tyrants, and redress the injured; men are to become happy by his labours, and heroic by his example.

Night. Jupiter is very gracious indeed to mankind! but I am not much oblig'd to him for the honourable employment he has been pleased to assign me in this business.

Merc. Not obliged to him, madam! why so? You was always a friend to mankind, and he might reasonably think you would take pleasure in deserving their homage upon so important an occasion.

Night. Pleasure! what in taking upon me the most odious character, a character that ———

Merc. Come, come, madam, that is good of which good comes; this is a safe principle for us Deities, whatever it is for mortals, who can no more see the consequences of their own actions than what is doing behind your curtain.

Night. Sir, I beg pardon—I acknowledge, sir, that you are much better acquainted with these affairs than I am; and therefore I will e'en accept of my employment, relying wholly upon your judgment.

Merc. Not so fast, good Madam Night; none of your innuendo's, if you please: you are reported not to be so shy as you pretend; and I know that you are the trusty confident of many a private treaty, and have as little to boast of in some particulars as I.

Night. Well, well, do not let us expose ourselves to the malicious laughter of mankind by our quarrels.

Merc. About your business then: put a spoke into your chariot-wheels, and order the Seven Stars to halt, while I put myself into the habit of a serving-man; and dress up a false Sosia, to wait upon a false Amphitryon. Good night, Night.

Night. My service to Jupiter. Farewell, Mercury.

[Night *goes backward.* *Exit* Merc.

SCENE,

SCENE, Amphitryon's *palace.*

Enter Alcmena *alone.*

Alc. Why was I marry'd to the man I love!
For, had he been indifferent to my choice,
Or had been hated, abſence had been pleaſure;
But now I fear for my Amphitryon's life.
At home, in private, and ſecure from war,
I am amidſt an hoſt of armed foes:
Suſtaining all his cares, pierc'd with his wounds;
And if he falls (which O ye Gods avert)
Am in Amphitryon ſlain! Wou'd I were there,
And he were here; ſo might we change our fates;
That he might grieve for me, and I might die for him!

Enter Phædra *running.*

Phæd. Good news, good news, madam!—O ſuch admirable news, that if I kept it in a moment, I ſhou'd burſt with it!

Alc. Is it from the army?

Phæd. No matter.

Alc. From Amphitryon?

Phæd. No matter, neither.

Alc. Anſwer me, I charge thee, if thy good news be any thing relating to my lord: if it be, aſſure thyſelf of a reward.

Phæd. Ay, madam, now you ſay ſomething to the matter: you know the buſineſs of a poor waiting-woman, here upon earth, is to be ſcraping up ſomething againſt a rainy day, call'd the day of marriage; every one in our own vocation: but what matter is it to me if my lord has routed the enemy, if I get nothing of their ſpoils?

Alc. Say, is my lord victorious?

Phæd. Why, he is victorious; indeed I pray'd devoutly to Jupiter for a victory; by the ſame token, that you ſhou'd give me ten pieces of gold, if I brought you news of it.

Alc. They are thine; ſuppoſing he be ſafe too.

Phæd. Nay, that's a new bargain; for I vow'd to Jupiter, that then you ſhould give me ten pieces more. But I do undertake for my lord's ſafety; if you will pleaſe to diſcharge Jupiter of the debt, and take it upon you to pay.

Alc.

Alc. When he returns in ſafety, Jupiter and I will pay your vow.

Phæd. And I am ſure I articled with Jupiter, that if I brought you news, that my lord was upon return, you ſhould grant me one ſmall favour more that will coſt you nothing.

Alc. Make haſte, thou torturer; is my Amphitryon upon return?

Phæd. Promiſe me that I ſhall be your bedfellow to-night, as I have been ever ſince my lord's abſence, —unleſs I ſhall be pleas'd to releaſe you of your word.

Alc. That's a ſmall requeſt, 'tis granted.

Phæd. But ſwear by Jupiter.

Alc. I ſwear by Jupiter.

Phæd. Then I believe he is victorious: and I know he is ſafe; for I look'd through the key-hole, and ſaw him knocking at the gate.

Alc. And wou'dſt thou not open to him? O thou traitreſs!

Phæd. No, I was a little wiſer: I left Soſia's wife to let him in: for I was reſolv'd to bring the news, and make my pennyworths out of him, as time ſhall ſhow.

Enter Jupiter *in the ſhape of* Amphitryon, *with* Soſia's *wife* Bromia. *He kiſſes and embraces* Alcmena.

Jup. O let me live for ever on thoſe lips!———
The nectar of the Gods to theſe is taſteleſs.
I ſwear, that were I Jupiter, this night
I wou'd renounce my heav'n to be Amphitryon.

Alc. Then not to ſwear beneath Amphitryon's oath,
(Forgive me, Juno, if I am profane)
I ſwear, I wou'd be what I am this night;
And be Alcmena, rather than be Juno.

Brom. Good, my lord, what's become of my poor bedfellow, your man Soſia? What, I ſay, tho' I am a poor woman, I have a huſband as well as my lady.

Phæd. And what have you done with your old friend, and my old ſweetheart, Judge Gripus? If he be rich, I'll make him welcome, like an honourable magiſtrate: but if not ———

Alc. My lord, you tell me nothing of the battle. Is Thebes victorious, are our foes deſtroy'd?

For now I find you safe, I should be glad
To hear you were in danger.

Brom. [*Pulling him on one side.*] I ask'd the first question: answer me, my lord.

Phæd. [*Pulling him on t'other side.*] Peace, mine's a lover, and yours but a husband: and my judge is my lord too; the title shall take place, and I will be answer'd.

Jup. Sosia is safe—Gripus is rich—both coming
I rode before 'em with a lover's haste———

Alc. Then I, it seems, am last to be regarded?

Jup. Not so, my love; but these obstreperous tongues
Have snatch'd their answers first: they will be heard—
Let us retire where none shall interrupt us;
I'll tell thee there the battle and success.
But I shall oft begin, and then break off;
For love will often interrupt my tale,
And make so sweet confusion in our talk,
That thou shalt ask, and I shall answer things,
That are not of a piece, but patch'd with kisses;
And nonsense shall be eloquent in love.

Alc. I am the fool of love, and find within me,
The fondness of a bride, without the fear.
My whole desires and wishes are in you.
Great Juno, thou whose holy care presides
O'er wedded love, thy choicest blessings pour
On this auspicious night.

Jup. Juno may grudge; for she may fear a rival
In those bright eyes: but Jupiter will grant,
And doubly bless this night.

Phæd. [*Aside.*] But Jupiter shou'd ask my leave first.

Alc. Bromia, prepare the chamber:
The tedious journey has dispos'd my lord
To seek his needful rest. [*Exit* Bromia.

Phæd. 'Tis very true, madam; the poor gentleman must needs be weary: and, therefore, 'twas not ill-contriv'd that he must lie alone to-night.

Alc. [*To Jupiter.*] I must confess I made a kind of promise ———

Phæd. [*Almost crying.*] A kind of promise, do you call it? I see you wou'd fain be coming off: I am sure you swore to me, by Jupiter, that I should be your bedfellow, and I'll accuse you to him too, the first

firſt prayers I make; and I'll pray on purpoſe too, that I will.

Jup. O, the malicious hilding!

Alc. I did ſwear indeed, my lord.

Jup. Forſwear thyſelf; for Jupiter but laughs
At lovers perjuries.

Phæd. The more ſhame for him if he does.

Jup. Alcmena come,———

Alc. [*Sighing.*] She has my oath;
And ſure ſhe may releaſe it if ſhe pleaſes ——

Phæd. Why truly, madam, I am not cruel in my nature to poor diſtreſſed lovers: for it may be my own caſe another day: and therefore, if my lord pleaſes to conſider me———

Jup. Any thing, any thing! but name thy wiſh, and have it.——

Phæd. Ay, now you ſay, any thing, any thing! but you wou'd tell me another ſtory to-morrow morning. Look you, my lord, here's a hand open to receive; you know the meaning of it.

Jup. Thou ſhalt have all the treaſury of heav'n.

Phæd. Yes, when you are Jupiter to diſpoſe of it. You have got ſome part of the enemies ſpoil I warrant you—I ſee a little trifling diamond upon your finger; and I am proud enough to think it would become mine too.

Jup. Here, take it.

[*Taking a ring off his finger and giving it.*

This is a very woman:
Her ſex is avarice, and ſhe, in one,
Is all her ſex.

Phæd. Ay, ay, 'tis no matter what you ſay of us. Go, get you together, you naughty couple: to-morrow morning I ſhall have another fee for parting you. [Phædra *goes out before* Alcmena *with a light.*

Jup. [*Solus.*] Now, for one night I leave the world to fate;
Love is alone my great affair of ſtate.
This night let all my altars ſmoke in vain,
And man, unheeded, praiſe me or complain.
Yet if in ſome ſhort intervals of reſt,
By ſome fond youth an am'rous vow's addreſt,
His pray'r is in an happy hour preferr'd;
And when Jove loves, a lover ſhall be heard. [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT II. *A Night Scene of a Palace.*

Sosia *with a dark lanthorn:* Mercury *in* Sosia's *shape, with a dark lanthorn also.*

Sos. WAS not the devil in my master, to send me out this dreadful dark night, to bring the news of his victory to my lady? And was not I possess'd with ten devils, for going on his errand, without a convoy for the safeguard of my person? Lord, how am I melted into sweat with fear! I am diminish'd of my natural weight above two stone: I shall not bring half myself home again, to my poor wife and family. Well! the greatest plague of a serving-man is to be hir'd to some great lord! They care not what drudgery they put upon us, while they lie lolling at their ease a-bed, and stretch their lazy limbs, in expectation of the whore which we are fetching for them. The better sort of 'em will say, upon my honour, at every word: Yet ask 'em for our wages, and they plead the privilege of their honour, and will not pay us; nor let us take our privilege of the law upon them. These are a very hopeful sort of patriots, to stand up as they do for liberty and property of the subject: there's conscience for you!

Merc. [*Aside.*] This fellow has something of the Republican spirit in him.

Sos. [*Looking about him.*] Stay, this methinks shou'd be our house. And I shou'd thank the Gods now for bringing me safe home: but I think I had as good let my devotions alone, till I have got the reward for my good news, and then thank 'em once for all: for if I praise 'em before I am safe within doors, some damn'd mastiff-dog may come out and worry me; and then my thanks are thrown away upon 'em.

Merc. [*Aside.*] Thou art a wicked rogue, and wilt have my bargain before-hand: therefore thou get'st not into the house this night; and thank me accordingly as I use thee.

Sos. Now I am to give my lady an account of my lord's victory: 'tis good to exercise my parts before-hand,

hand, and file my tongue into eloquent expreſſions, to tickle her ladyſhip's imagination.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] Good! and here's the God of Eloquence to judge of thy oration.

Soſ. [*Setting down his lanthorn.*] This lanthorn, for once, ſhall be my lady; becauſe ſhe is the lamp of all beauty and perfection.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] Excellent!

Soſ. Then thus I make my addreſſes to her: [*Bows.*] Madam, my lord has choſen me out, as the moſt faithful, tho' the moſt unworthy of his followers, to bring your ladyſhip this following account of our glorious expedition. Then ſhe——O my poor Sofia, [*in a ſhrill tone.*] how am I overjoy'd to ſee thee!—She can ſay no leſs——Madam, you do me too much honour, and the world will envy me this glory:——Well anſwer'd on my ſide———And how does my lord Amphitryon?——Madam, he always does like a man of courage, when he is call'd by honour.——There I think I nick'd it.———But when will he return?——As ſoon as poſſibly he can: but not ſo ſoon as his impatient heart cou'd wiſh him with your ladyſhip.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] When Thebes is an univerſity, thou deſerveſt to be their orator.

Soſ. But what does he do, and what does he ſay? Pr'ythee tell me ſomething more of him——He always ſays leſs than he does, madam; and his enemies have found it to their coſt—Where the devil did I learn theſe elegancies and gallantries?

Merc. So; he has all the natural endowments of a fop, and only wants the education!

Soſ. [*Staring up to the ſky.*] What, is the devil in the night? She's as long as two nights: the Seven Stars are juſt where they were ſeven hours ago! High day—high night, I mean, by my favour—What, has Phœbus been playing the good-fellow, and over-ſlept himſelf, that he forgets his duty to us mortals?

Merc. How familiarly the raſcal treats us Gods! but I ſhall make him alter his tone immediately.

[Mercury *comes nearer, and ſtands juſt before him.*

Soſ. [*Seeing him, and ſtarting back, aſide.*] How now! What do my eyes dazzle, or is my dark lanthorn

AMPHITRION.

...wards del. Publish'd April 20 1777. by T. Lowndes & Partners. Goldar Sculp.

Mr. WOODWARD in the Character of SOCIA.

This Lanthorn for once shall be my Lady.

thorn false to me? Is not that a giant before our door? or a ghost of somebody slain in the late battle? If he be, 'tis unconscionably done, to fright an honest man thus, who never drew weapon wrathfully in all his life——Whatever wight he be, I am devilishly afraid, that's certain; but 'tis discretion to keep my own counsel: I'll sing, that I may seem valiant.

[Sosia *sings, and as* Mercury *speaks, by little and little drops his voice.*

Merc. What saucy companion is this, that deafens us with his hoarse voice? What midnight ballad-singer have we here? I shall teach the villain to leave off catterwawling.

Sos. I would I had courage, for his sake, that I might teach him to call my singing catterwawling—an illiterate rogue; an enemy to the Muses and to music!

Merc. There is an ill savour that offends my nostrils, and it wafteth this way.

Sos. He has smelt me out: my fear has betray'd me into this savour——I am a dead man! The bloody villain is at his fee, fa, fum, already.

Merc. Stand, who goes there?

Sos. A friend.

Merc. What friend?

Sos. Why a friend to all the world, that will give me leave to live peaceably.

Merc. I defy peace and all its works—My arms are out of exercise, they have maul'd nobody these three days: I long for an honourable occasion to pound a man, and lay him asleep at the first buffet.

Sos. [*Aside.*] That would almost do me a kindness; for I have been kept waking, without tipping one wink of sleep, these three nights.

Merc. Of what quality are you, fellow?

Sos. Why, I am a man, fellow—Courage Sosia!—

Merc. What kind of man?

Sos. Why, a two-legg'd man, what man should I be? [*Aside.*]—I must bear up to him, one may prove as errant a milksop as myself.

Merc. Thou art a coward, I warrant thee; do not I hear thy teeth chatter in thy head?

Sos.

Sof. Ay, ay, that's only a ſign they would be ſnapping at thy noſe.—' [*Aſide.*] Bleſs me, what an arm ' and fiſt he has! with great thumbs too—and golls ' and knuckle-bones of a very butcher.'

Merc. Sirrah, from whence come you, and whither go you? Anſwer me directly, upon pain of aſſaſſination.

Sof. I am coming from whence I came, and am going whither I go; that's directly home—Tho' this is ſomewhat an uncivil manner of proceeding, at the firſt ſight of a man, let me tell you.

Merc. Then to begin our better acquaintance, let me firſt make you a ſmall preſent of this box o' th' ear——— [*Strikes him.*

Sof. If I were as choleric a fool as you are now, here would be fine work betwixt us two! but I am a little better bred, than to diſturb the ſleeping neighbourhood; and ſo good night, friend——— [*Going.*

Merc. [*Stopping him.*] Hold, ſir, you and I muſt not part ſo eaſily. Once more, whither are you going?

Sof. Why I am going as faſt as I can, to get out of the reach of your clutches. Let me but only knock at that door there.

Merc. What buſineſs have you at that door, ſirrah?

Sof. This is our houſe; and when I'm got in, I'll tell you more.

Merc. Whoſe houſe is this ſaucineſs, that you are ſo familiar with, to call it ours?

Sof. 'Tis mine, in the firſt place; and next my maſter's; for I lie in the garret, and he lies under me.

Merc. Have your maſter and you no names, ſirrah?

Sof. His name is Amphitryon—hear that and tremble!

Merc. What, my lord general?

Sof. O, has his name mollify'd you! I have brought you down a peg lower already, friend.

Merc. And your name is———

Sof. Lord, friend, you are ſo very troubleſome—what ſhould my name be but *Soſia*?

Merc. How, Soſia, ſay you? How long have you taken up that name, ſirrah?

Sof.

Sof. Here's a fine queſtion! Why I never took it up friend; it was born with me.

Merc. What was your name born Soſia? Take this remembrance for that lye. [*Beats him.*

Sof. Hold, friend, you are ſo very flippant with your hands, you won't hear reaſon: What offence has my name done you, that you ſhould beat me for it? S, O, S, I, A, they are as civil, honeſt, harmleſs letters, as any are in the whole alphabet.

Merc. I have no quarrel to the name, but that 'tis e'en too good for you, and 'tis none of yours.

Sof. What, am not I Soſia, ſay you?

Merc. No.

Sof. I ſhould think you are ſomewhat merrily diſpoſed, if you had not beaten me into ſuch ſober ſadneſs. You would perſuade me out of my heathen name, would you?

Merc. Say you are Soſia again at your peril, ſirrah.

Sof. I dare ſay nothing, but thought is free—But whatever I am call'd, I am Amphitryon's man, and the firſt letter of my name is S too. You had beſt tell me that my maſter did not ſend me home to my lady, with news of his victory?

Merc. I ſay he did not.

Sof. Lord, lord, friend, one of us two is horribly given to lying! but I do not ſay which of us, to avoid contention.

Merc. I ſay my name is Soſia, and yours is not.

Sof. I would you could make good your words; for then I ſhould not be beaten, and you ſhould.

Merc. I find you would be Soſia, if you durſt—'but 'if I catch you thinking ſo———

'*Sof.* I hope I may think I was Soſia: and I can 'find no difference between my former ſelf, and my 'preſent ſelf; but that I was plain Soſia before, and 'now I am lac'd Soſia.

'*Merc.*' Take this, for being ſo impudent as to think ſo. [*Beats him.*

Sof. [*Kneeling.*] Truce a little, I beſeech thee! I would be a ſtock or a ſtone now by my good will, and would not think at all, for ſelf-preſervation. But will you give me leave to argue the matter fairly with you? 'And promiſe me to depoſe that cudgel, if I

'can

'can prove myſelf to be that man that I was before 'I was beaten?

'*Merc.* Well, proceed in ſafety; I promiſe you I 'will not beat you.

'*Sof.* In the firſt place, then, is not this town 'call'd Thebes?

'*Merc.* Undoubtedly.

'*Sof.* And is not this houſe Amphitryon's?

'*Merc.* Who denies it?

'*Sof.* I thought you would have deny'd that too, 'for all hang upon a ſtring. Remember then, that 'thoſe two preliminary articles are already granted. 'In the next place, did not the aforeſaid Amphitryon 'beat the Teleboans, kill their king Pterelas, and 'ſend a certain ſervant, meaning ſomebody, that for 'ſake-ſake ſhall be nameleſs, with news of his victory, 'and of his reſolution to return to-morrow?

'*Merc.* This is all true, to a very tittle; but who 'is that certain ſervant? there's all the queſtion.

'*Sof.* Is it peace or war betwixt us?

'*Merc.* Peace.

'*Sof.* I dare not wholly truſt that abominable cudgel '—but 'tis a certain friend of yours and mine, that 'had a certain name, before he was beaten out of it.' But if you are a man that depend not altogether upon force and brutality, but ſomewhat alſo upon reaſon, now do you bring better proofs that you are that ſame certain man; and in order to it, anſwer me to certain queſtions.

'*Merc.* I ſay I am Soſia, Amphitryon's man: what 'reaſon have you to urge againſt it?

'*Sol.* What was your father's name?

'*Merc.* Davus; who was an honeſt huſbandman, 'whoſe ſiſter's name was Harpage, that was marry'd 'and died in a foreign country.

'*Sof.* So far you are right, I muſt confeſs; and your 'wife's name is ———

'*Merc.* Bromia—a deviliſh ſhrew of her tongue, and 'a vixen of her hands, that leads me a miſerable life.--

'*Sof.* By many a ſorrowful token. This muſt be I—

'*Merc.* I was once taken upon ſuſpicion of bur-'glary, and was whipt thro' Thebes, and branded for 'my pains.

'*Sof.*

'*Sof.* Right me again—But if you are I, as I begin 'to ſuſpect, that whipping and branding might have 'been paſt over in ſilence, for both our credits:—and 'yet, now I think on't, if I am I, (as I am I) he can-'not be I. All theſe circumſtances he might have 'heard; but I will now interrogate him upon ſome 'private paſſages. [*Aſide.*]'—*Imprimis*, What was Amphitryon's ſhare of the booty?

Merc. A buckle of diamonds, conſiſting of five large ſtones, which was worn as an ornament by Pterelas.

Sof. What does he intend to do with it?

Merc. To preſent it to his wife Alcmena.

Sof. And where is it now?

Merc. In a caſe, ſeal'd with my maſter's coat of arms.

Sof. This is prodigious, I confeſs!—but yet 'tis nothing, now I think on't, for ſome falſe brother may have reveal'd it to him. [*Aſide.*]—But I have another queſtion to aſk you, of ſomewhat that paſs'd only betwixt myſelf and me: if you are Sofia, what were you doing in the heat of battle?

Merc. What a wiſe man ſhould, that has a reſpect for his own perſon. I ran into our tent, and hid myſelf amongſt the baggage.

Sof. [*Aſide.*] Such another cutting anſwer, and I muſt provide myſelf of another name. [*To him.*] And how did you paſs your time in that ſame tent?—You need not anſwer to every circumſtance ſo exactly now; you muſt lie a little, that I may think you the more me.

Merc. That cunning ſhall not ſerve your turn, to circumvent me out of my name: I am for plain naked truth—There ſtood a hogſhead of old wine, which my lord reſerv'd for his own drinking———

Sof. O the devil! As ſure as death, he muſt have hid himſelf in that hogſhead, or he could never have known that.

Merc. And by that hogſhead, upon the ground, there lay the kind inviter and provoker of good drinking———

Sof. Nay, now I have caught you—there was neither inviter nor provoker, for I was all alone.

Merc.

Merc. A lusty gammon of———

Sos. [*Sighing.*] Bacon!——That word has quite made an end of me——Let me see—this must be I, in spite of me——but let me view him nearer.

[*Walks about* Mercury *with his dark lanthorn.*

Merc. What are you walking about me for, with your dark lanthorn?

Sos. No harm, friend—I am only surveying a parcel of earth here, that I find we two are about to bargain for.——[*Aside.*] He's damnable like me, that's certain. *Imprimis*, there's the patch upon my nose, with a pox to him—*Item*, a very foolish face, with a long chin at the end on't—*Item*, one pair of shambling legs, with two splay feet belonging to them.—And, *summa totalis*, from head to foot all my bodily apparel—[*To* Mercury.] Well, you are Sosia, there's no denying it; but what am I then? for my mind gives me, I am somebody still, if I knew but who I were.

Merc. When I have a mind to be Sosia no more, then thou may'st be Sosia again.

Sos. I have but one request more to thee——that, tho' not as Sosia, yet as a stranger, I may go into that house, and carry a civil message to my lady.

Merc. No, sirrah; not being Sosia, you have no message to deliver, nor lady in this house.

Sos. Thou canst not be so barbarous, to let me lie in the streets all night, after such a journey, and such a beating—and therefore I am resolv'd to knock at the door in my own defence.

Merc. If you come near the door, I recal my word, and break off the truce——and then expect———

[*Holds up his cudgel.*

Sos. No, the devil take me if I do expect—I have felt too well what sour fruit that crab-tree bears: I'll rather beat it back upon the hoof to my lord Amphitryon, to see if he will acknowledge me for Sosia: if he does not, then I am no longer his slave; there's my freedom dearly purchas'd with a sore drubbing: if he does acknowledge me, then I am Sosia again; so far 'tis tolerably well: but then I shall have a second drubbing for an unfortunate ambassador as I am; and that's intolerable. [*Exit* Sosia.

Mercury *alone.*

I have fobb'd off his excellency pretty well. Now let him return, and make the beſt of his credentials. But here comes Jupiter.

Enter Jupiter *leading* Alcmena, *follow'd by* Phædra. *Pages with torches before them.*

Jup. Thoſe torches are offenſive; ſtand aloof:
[*To the Pages.*
For, tho' they bleſs me with thy heav'nly ſight,
[*To her.*
They may diſcloſe the ſecret I would hide:
The Thebans muſt not know I have been here;
Detracting crowds would blame me that I ſtole
Theſe happy moments from my public charge,
To conſecrate to thee; and I could wiſh
That none were witneſs of the theft, but ſhe
By whom it is approv'd———

Alc. So long an abſence, and ſo ſhort a ſtay!
What, but one night! One night of joy and love,
Could only pay one night of cares and fears;
And all the reſt are an uncancell'd ſum!

Jup. Alcmena, I muſt go.

Alc. Not yet, my lord.

Jup. Indeed I muſt.

Alc. Indeed you ſhall not go.

Jup. Behold the ruddy ſtreaks o'er yonder hill!
Thoſe are the bluſhes of the breaking morn,
That kindle day-light to this nether world.

Alc. No matter for the day, it was but made
To number out the hours of buſy men.
Let 'em be buſy ſtill, and ſtill be wretched;
And take their fill of anxious drudging day:
But we'll
Extinguiſh day-light, and ſhut out the ſun.
Stay then, my lord—I'll bribe you with this kiſs.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] That's a plaguy little devil; what a roguiſh eye ſhe has! I begin to like her ſtrangely: ſhe's the perquiſite of my place too; for my lady's waiting-woman is the proper fees of my lord's chief gentleman.

Jup. A bribe indeed that ſoon will bring me back,
Tho' now it is not poſſible to ſtay.
Alc. Not poſſible! Alas, how ſhort is life,
If we compute alone thoſe happy hours
In which we wiſh to live! Our ſev'nty years
Are fill'd with pains, diſeaſes, wants, and woes,
And only daſh'd with love; a little love!
Sprinkled by fits, and with a ſparing hand.
Count all our joys from childhoood ev'n to age,
They would but make a day of ev'ry year.
O! wou'd the Gods compriſe the quinteſſence
In ſev'nty days, and take the reſt away! [mena,
Jup. By Heav'n, thy ev'ry word and look, Alc-
Fans the fierce flame thy charms have kindled here:
My love increas'd by thine, as fire by fire,
Mounts with more ardor in a brighter blaze.
But yet one ſcruple pains me at my parting;
I love ſo nicely that I cannot bear
To owe my pleaſures to ſubmiſſive duty:
Tell me, and ſooth my paſſion, that you give them
All to the lover, and forget the huſband.
Alc. And yet, my lord, the huſband's right alone
Can juſtify the love that burns for you:
'Nor do I ſuffer ought that wou'd ſuggeſt
'The ſcruple which your fond deſire has rais'd.'
Jup. O that you lov'd like me! then you would
A thouſand, thouſand niceties in love. [find
The common love of ſex to ſex is brutal:
But love refin'd will fancy to itſelf
Millions of gentle cares, and ſweet diſquiets:
The being happy is not half the joy;
The manner of the happineſs is all!
Alc. Confeſſing that you love, and are belov'd,
Reſt happy in that thought; nor wiſh to loſe
The right that conſecrates the lover's joy.
Jup. I am at once a lover and a huſband:
But as a lover only am I happy;
A lover jealous of a huſband's right,
By which he ſcorns to claim; whoſe tend'reſt joy
Muſt all be giv'n, not paid. O! my Alcmena,
Indulge the lover's wiſhes thus refin'd,

Divide

Divide him from the husband —— give to each
What each requires; thy virtue to the husband,
And on the lover lavish all thy love.

Alc. I comprehend not what you mean, my lord:
But only love me still, and love me thus,
And think me such as best may please your thought.

Jup. There's mystery of love in all I say:
But duty, cruel duty, tears me from thee.
Howe'er indulge at least this small request ——
When next you see your husband, dear Alcmena,
Think of your lover then.

Alc. O let me ne'er divide what Heav'n has join'd!
Husband and lover both are dear to me.

Jup. Farewel ——

Alc. Farewel—but will you soon return?

Jup. I will, believe me, with a lover's haste.

[*Exeunt* Jup. *and* Alc. *severally*; Phæd. *follows her.*

Merc. [*Alone.*] Now I should follow him, but Love has laid a lime-twig for me, and made a lame God of me. Yet why should I love this Phædra? She's mercenary, and a jilt into the bargain. Three thousand years hence there will be a whole nation of such women, in a certain country that will be called France; and there's a neighbour island too, where the men will be all interest. O what a precious generation will that be, which the men of the island shall propagate out of the women of the continent! [Phædra *re-enters.*] And so much for prophecy; for she's here again, and I must love her in spite of me.

Phæd. Well, Sosia, and how go matters?

Merc. Our army is victorious.

Phæd. And my servant, judge Gripus?

Merc. A voluptuous gormand.

Phæd. But has he gotten wherewithal to be voluptuous, is he wealthy?

Merc. He sells justice as he uses, fleeces the rich rebels, and hangs up the poor.

Phæd. Then while he has money he may make love to me. Has he sent me no token?

Merc. Yes, a kiss; and by the same token, I am to give it you, as a remembrance from him.

Phæd. How now, impudence! a beggarly ſervingman preſume to kiſs me!

Merc. Suppoſe I were a God, and ſhou'd make love to you?

Phæd. I would be firſt ſatisfy'd whether you were a poor God or a rich God.

Merc. Suppoſe I were Mercury, the God of merchandiſe?

Phæd. What, the God of ſmall wares and fripperies, of pedlars and pilferers?

Merc. [*Aſide.*] How the gipſy deſpiſes me!

Phæd. I had rather you were Plutus, the God of money, or Jupiter in a golden ſhower: there was a God for us women! he had the art of making love. Doſt thou think that kings, or Gods either, get miſtreſſes by their good faces? no, 'tis the gold, and the preſents they can make; there's the prerogative they have over their fair ſubjects.

Merc. All this notwithſtanding, I muſt tell you, pretty Phædra, I am deſperately in love with you.

Phæd. And I muſt tell thee, ugly Soſia, thou haſt not wherewithal to be in love.

Merc. Yes, a poor man may be in love, I hope.

Phæd. I grant a poor rogue may be in love, but he can never make love. Alas, Soſia, thou haſt neither face to invite me, nor youth to pleaſe me, nor gold to bribe me: and beſides all this, thou haſt a wife—poor miſerable Soſia! What ho, Bromia!

Merc. O thou mercileſs creature! why doſt thou conjure up that ſpright of a wife?

Phæd. To rid myſelf of that devil of a poor lover. Since you are ſo lovingly diſpos'd, I'll put you together: what Bromia, I ſay, make haſte.

Merc. Since thou wilt call her, ſhe ſhall have all the cargo I have gotten in the wars.

Phæd. Why, what have you gotten, good gentleman ſoldier, beſides a legion of—— [*Snaps her fingers.*

Merc. When the enemy was routed, I had the plundering of a tent.

Phæd. That's to ſay, a houſe of canvas, with moveables of ſtraw: make haſte, Bromia ——

Merc. But it was the general's own tent.

Phæd. You durſt not fight, I'm certain; and therefore came laſt in when the rich plunder was gone before-hand—Will you come, Bromia?

Merc. Pr'ythee do not call ſo loud——A great goblet that holds a gallon.

Phæd. Of what was that goblet made? anſwer quickly, for I am juſt calling very loud——*Bro*——

Merc. Of beaten gold——Now call aloud, if thou doſt not like the metal.

Phæd. Bromia. [*Very ſoftly.*

Merc. That ſtruts in this faſhion, with his arms akimbo, like a city magiſtrate; and a great bouncing belly, like a hoſteſs with child of a kilderkin of wine. Now, what ſay you to that preſent, Phædra?

Phæd. Why I am conſidering ——

Merc. What, I pr'ythee?

Phæd. Why, how to divide the buſineſs equally; to take the gift, and refuſe the giver; thou art ſo damnably ugly, and ſo old.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] O! that I was not confin'd to this ungodly ſhape to-day!
But Gripus is as old and as ugly too.

Phæd. But Gripus is a perſon of quality, and my lady's uncle; and if he marries me, I ſhall take place of my lady. Hark, your wife! ſhe has ſent her tongue before her. I hear the thunderclap already; there's a ſtorm approaching.

Merc. Yes, of thy brewing, I thank thee for it: O how I ſhould hate thee now, if I cou'd leave loving thee.

Phæd. Not a word of the dear golden goblet, as you hope for——you know what, Soſia.

Merc. You give me hope, then——

Phæd. Not abſolutely hope neither: but gold is a great cordial in love matters; and the more you apply of it, the better——[*Aſide.*] I am honeſt, that's certain; but when I weigh my honeſty againſt the goblet, I am not quite reſolv'd on which ſide the ſcale will turn. [*Exit* Phædra.

Merc. [*Aloud.*] Farewel, Phædra; remember me to my wife, and tell her——

Enter Bromia.

Brom. Tell her what? traytor! that you are going away without seeing her.

Merc. That I am doing my duty, and following my master.

Brom. Umph——so brisk too! Your master cou'd leave his army in the lurch, and come galloping home at midnight, and steal to bed as quietly as any mouse, I warrant you: my master knew what belong'd to a married life; but you, sirrah——you trencher-carrying rascal, you worse than dunghill-cock! that stood clapping your wings, and crowing without doors, when you should have been at roost, you villain!——

Merc. Hold your peace, dame Partlet, and leave your cackling: my master charg'd me to stand centry without doors.

Brom. My master! I dare swear thou bely'st him; my master's more a gentleman than to lay such an unreasonable command upon a poor distressed marry'd couple, and after such an absence too. No, there's no comparison between my master and thee, thou sneaksby.

Merc. No more than there is betwixt my lady and you, Bromia. You and I have had our time in a civil way, spouse, and much good love has been betwixt us: but we have been marry'd fifteen years, I take it, and that hoighty-toighty business ought, in conscience, to be over.

Brom. Marry come up, my saucy companion! I am neither old, nor ugly enough to have that said to me.

Merc. But will you hear reason, Bromia? My lord and my lady are yet in a manner bride and bridegroom:—do but think in decency, what a jest it wou'd be to the family, to see two venerable old married people, ogling and leering, and sighing out fine tender things to one another.

Brom. How now, traitor, dar'st thou maintain, that I am past the age of having fine things said to me?

Merc. Not so, my dear; but certainly I am past the age of saying 'em.

Brom.

Brom. Thou deſerveſt not to be yok'd with a woman of honour, as I am, thou perjur'd villain!

Merc. Ay, you are too much a woman of honour, to my ſorrow; many a poor huſband wou'd be glad to compound for leſs honour in his wife, and more quiet. Pr'ythee be but honeſt, and continent in thy tongue, and do thy worſt with every thing elſe about thee.

Brom. Thou wou'dſt have me a woman of the town, wou'dſt thou! to be always ſpeaking my huſband fair, to make him digeſt his cuckoldom more eaſily: wou'dſt thou be a wittal, with a vengeance to thee? I am reſolv'd I'll ſcour thy hide for that word.

[*Holds up her ladle at him.*

Merc. Thou wilt not ſtrike thy lord and huſband, wilt thou? [*She courſes him about.*] [*Aſide.*] Was ever poor Deity ſo hen-peck'd as I am?—Nay, then, 'tis time to charm her aſleep with my enchanted rod—before I am diſgrac'd or raviſh'd——

[*Plucks out his caduceus, and ſtrikes her upon the ſhoulder with it.*]

Brom. What, art thou rebelling againſt thy anointed wife? I'll make thee——How now!——What, has the rogue bewitch'd me! I grow dull and ſtupid on the ſudden——I can neither ſtir hand nor foot——[*Yawning.*]——I can't ſo much as wag my tongue—neither; and that's the laſt liv—ing part about a——woman——— [*Falls down.*

Merc. Lord, what have I ſuffer'd, for being but a counterfeit marry'd man one day! If ever I come to his houſe, as a huſband again——then——And yet that then was a lye too—For while I am in love with this young gipſy Phædra, I muſt return—But lie thou there, thou type of Juno; thou that want'ſt nothing of her tongue but the immortality. If Jupiter ever let thee ſet foot where ſhe is, Juno will have a rattling ſecond of thee.

For two ſuch tongues will break the poles aſunder;
And, hourly ſcolding, make perpetual thunder.

[*Exit* Mercury.

ACT III. SCENE *before* Amphitryon's *Palace*.

Amphitryon and *Sosia*.

Amph. NOW, sirrah, follow me into the house —thou shalt be convinc'd at thy own cost, villain! What horrible lies hast thou told me! such improbabilities, such stuff, such nonsense!——

Sos. I am but a slave, and you are master; and a poor man is always to lye, when a rich man is pleas'd to contradict him: but as sure as this is our house——

Amph. So sure 'tis thy place of execution.

Sos. Hold, dear sir! if I must have a second beating, in conscience let me strip first, that I may show you the black and blue streaks upon my sides and shoulders. I am sure I suffer'd them in your service.

Amph. To what purpose wou'dst thou show them?

Sos. Why, to the purpose that you may not strike me upon the sore places; and that as he beat me the last night cross-ways, so you wou'd please to beat me long-ways, to make clean work on't, that at least my skin may look like chequer-work.

Amph. This request is too reasonable to be refus'd: but, that all things may be done in order, tell me over-again the same story, with all the circumstances of thy commission; that a blow may follow in due form for every lye. To repetition, rogue, to repetition.

'*Sos.* No, it shall be all a lye, if you please; and 'I'll eat my words to save my shoulders.

'*Amph.* Ay, sirrah, now you find you are to be dis-'prov'd: but 'tis too late: to repetition, rogue, to 'repetition.'

Sos. With all my heart, to any repetition but the cudgel. But wou'd you be pleas'd to answer me one civil question? Am I to use complaisance to you, as to a great person, that will have all things said your own way; or am I to tell you the naked truth alone, without the ceremony of a farther beating?

Amph.

Amph. Nothing but the truth, and the whole truth; so help thee cudgel——

Sos. That's a damn'd conclusion of a sentence; but since it must be so ——back and sides, at your own peril —— I set out from the port in an unlucky hour; I went darkling and whistling, to keep myself from being afraid; mumbling curses betwixt my teeth, for being sent at such an unnatural time of night.

Amph. How, sirrah, cursing and swearing against your lord and master! take—— [*Going to strike.*

Sos. Hold, sir——pray consider, if this be not unreasonable, to strike me for telling the whole truth, when you commanded me: I'll fall into my old dog-trot of lying again, if this must come of plain dealing.

Amph. To avoid impertinencies, make an end of your journey, and come to the house; what found you there?

Sos. I found before the door a swinging fellow, with all my shapes and features, and accoutred also in my habit.

'*Amph.* Who was that fellow?

'*Sos.* Who shou'd it be but another Sosia! a certain 'kind of other me; who knew all my unfortunate 'commission, precisely to a word, as well as I Sosia; 'as being sent by yourself from the port, upon the 'same errand to Alcmena.

'*Amph.* What gross absurdities are these?

'*Sos.* O Lord, O Lord! what absurdities? as plain 'as any packstaff. That other Me, had posted himself 'there before Me, Me.—You won't give a man leave 'to speak poetically now, or else I wou'd say, that I 'was arriv'd at the door just before I came thither.

'*Amph.* This must either be a dream, or drunken-'ness, or madness in thee. Leave your buffooning 'and lying. I am not in humour to bear it, sirrah.

'*Sos.* I wou'd you shou'd know I scorn a lye, and 'am a man of honour in every thing but just fighting.' I tell you 'once again,' in plain sincerity and simplicity of heart, that before last night, I never took

myſelf but for one ſingle individual Soſia; but coming to our door, I found myſelf, I know not how, divided, and, as it were, ſplit into two Soſias.

Amph. Leave buffooning: I ſee you wou'd make me laugh, but you play the fool ſcurvily.

Sof. That may be: but if I am a fool, I am not the only fool in this company.

Amph. How now, impudence! I ſhall———

Sof. Be not in wrath, ſir; I meant not you. I cannot poſſibly be the only fool; for if I am one fool, I muſt certainly be two fools; becauſe, as I told you, I am double.

Amph. That one ſhould be two is very probable! —A man had need of patience to endure this gibberiſh——be brief, and come to a concluſion——

Sof. What wou'd you have, ſir? I came thither, but the t'other I was there before me; for that there were two I's is as certain, as that I have two eyes in this head of mine. This *I*, that am here, was weary; the t'other *I* was freſh: this *I* was peaceable, and t'other I was a hectoring bully *I*.

'*Amph.* And thou expect'ſt I ſhou'd believe thee?

'*Sof.* No, I am not ſo unreaſonable; for I cou'd 'never have believ'd it myſelf, if I had not been well 'beaten into it: but a cudgel, you know, is a con-'vincing argument in a brawny fiſt. What ſhall I 'ſay, but that I was compell'd at laſt to acknowledge 'myſelf? I found that he was very I, without fraud, 'cozen, or deceit. Beſides, I view'd myſelf, as in a 'mirror, from head to foot—he was handſome, of a 'noble preſence, a charming air, looſe and free in all 'his motions—and ſaw he was ſo much I, that I 'ſhou'd have reaſon to be better ſatisfied with my 'own perſon, if his hands had not been a little of 'the heavieſt.'

Amph. No more of your nonſenſe—ſay you paſs'd by him, and enter'd into the houſe.

Sof. I am a friend to truth, and ſay no ſuch thing: he defended the door, and I could not enter.

Amph. How, not enter!

Sof. Why, how ſhou'd I enter? unleſs I were a ſpright

ſpright to glide by him, and ſhoot myſelf through locks, and bolts, and two-inch boards?

Amph. O coward, didſt thou not attempt to paſs?

Soſ. Yes, and was repuls'd, and beaten for my pains.

Amph. Who beat thee?

Soſ. I beat Me.

Amph. Didſt thou beat thyſelf?

Soſ. I don't mean *I* here; but the abſent *Me* beat me here preſent.

Amph. There's no end of this intricate piece of nonſenſe.

Soſ. 'Tis only nonſenſe, becauſe I ſpeak it who am a poor fellow; but it wou'd be ſenſe, and ſubſtantial ſenſe, if a great man ſaid it, that was back'd with a title, and the eloquence of ten thouſand pounds a year.

Amph. No more——but let us enter. Hold, my Alcmena is coming out, and has prevented me! how ſtrangely will ſhe be ſurpriz'd to ſee me here ſo unexpectedly!

Enter Alcmena *and* Phædra.

Alc. [*To* Phæd.] Make haſte after me to the temple; that we may thank the Gods for this glorious ſucceſs, which Amphitryon has had againſt the rebels. O heaven!

Amph. Thoſe heav'ns, and all the bleſt inhabitants,
[*Saluting her.*
Grant, that the ſweet rewarder of my pains
May ſtill be kind, as on our nuptial night.

Alc. So ſoon return'd!

Amph. So ſoon return'd! Is this my welcome home?
[*Stepping back.*
So ſoon return'd, ſays I am come unwiſh'd!
This is no language of deſiring love:
Love reckons hours for months, and days for years;
And every little abſence is an age.

Alc. What ſays my lord?

Amph. No, my Alcmena, no:
True love by its impatience meaſures time,
And the dear object never comes too ſoon.

Alc. Nor ever came you ſo, nor ever ſhall:
But you yourſelf are chang'd from what you were,
Pall'd in deſires, and ſurfeited of bliſs;
Not ſuch as when laſt night at your return
I flew with tranſport to your claſping arms.

Amph. How's this?

Alc. Did you not read your welcome in my eyes?
Did you not hear it in my falt'ring voice?
Did not the pleaſing tumult ſhake my frame,
'Nature's ſpontaneous proof of ſudden joy'
Which no falſe love can feign!

Amph. What's this you tell me?

Alc. Far ſhort of truth, by Heav'n!
My proofs of joy, with joy you then receiv'd,
And gave with uſury back. At break of day
You left me with a ſigh; you now return,
Tho' not unwiſh'd, yet ſurely unexpected;
And why ſhou'd my ſurprize be thought a crime?

Amph. I left you with a ſigh at break of day!——

Alc. Yes, for the camp——have you forgot, Amphitryon?

Amph. Or have you dreamt, Alcmena?
Perhaps ſome kind, revealing Deity,
Has whiſper'd in your ſleep the pleaſing news
Of my return; and you believ'd it real.

Alc. Some melancholy vapour, ſure, has ſeiz'd
Your brain, Amphitryon, and diſturb'd your ſenſe:
Or yeſternight is not ſo long a time,
But you might yet remember
How kind a welcome to my arms I gave you.

Amph. I thank you for my melancholy vapour.

Alc. 'Tis but a juſt requital for my dream.

Phæd. If my maſter thinks fit thus to angle for a quarrel, I think he had no great reaſon to come back. [*In the mean time* Amph. *and* Alc. *walk by themſelves, and frown at each other as they meet.*]

Amph. You dare not juſtify it to my face.

Alc. Not what?

Amph. That I return'd before this hour.

Alc. You dare not, ſure, deny you came laſt night,
And ſtaid till break of day.

Amph.

Amph. O impudence!—why, Sosia!

Sos. Nay, I say nothing; for all things here may go by enchantment (as they did with me) for ought I know.

Alc. Speak, Phædra, was he here?

Phæd. You know, madam, I am but a chamber-maid: and by my place, I am to forget all that was done over night in love matters——unless my master pleases to rub up my memory with another diamond.

Amph. Now, in the name of all the Gods, Alcmena,
A little recollect your scatter'd thoughts,
And weigh what you have said.

Alc. I weigh'd it well, Amphitryon, ere I spoke;
And she, and Bromia, all the slaves and servants,
Can witness they beheld you when you came:
If other proof be wanting, tell me how
I came to know your fight, your victory,
The death of Pterelas in single combat?——

Amph. [*turning angrily to* Sosia.] Now, rascal!—you did not get into the house
And deliver my message, did you?

[*Going to strike him.*

Sos. Hold, sir, for the sake of truth and mercy!——Dear madam! [*to* Alcmena.] as your gentle nature is a friend to distressed innocence, interpose in my behalf.

Alc. [*to* Amph.] Why will you not, Amphitryon, answer me?
What in my question can have turn'd your rage
On this poor slave?

Amph. What but gross falshoods, which he forg'd to mock me:
And you abet him——But for this——

[*Is again going to strike* Sosia.

Sos. Nay, dear sir, do not punish me unheard.

Amph. Did you not tell me——

Sos. Yes, I did tell you—and I told you truly, that when I would have gone into the house, I was beaten away.

Amph. Well, sirrah, and don't it now appear, by what Alcmena says, that you did get in? how else could she know the news I sent you with, rascal?

Sos.

Sof. And don't it appear, by my back and ſhoulders, that I was beaten away? but you will not let a man produce his witneſſes ——

Amph. Did you not get in? Anſwer me that, rogue, directly, and without equivocation.

Sof. Why yes, it is true—and I muſt confeſs that, in ſome ſenſe, it may be ſaid that I *did* get in; tho' it may alſo, in a certain ſenſe, be truly ſaid, that I was beaten away.

Amph. Why thou impudent, prevaricating——

Sof. Sir, let me beſeech you, that reaſon may predominate, for my ſake, and that you would make ſuch diſtinctions as the nature of my caſe requires: it is true that I *did* get in, and it is true that I did *not* get in; this *I*, that is here now, did not get in, but was beaten away by t'other *I*; but that other *I* did get in, and was not beaten away—there is a *me* me, and there is a *he* me———

Amph. Audacious ſlave! 'twere infamy to ſpare thee.

Phæd. Do, my lord, pray ſpare him, till he has told the reſt of his ſtory; it is but beating him a little the more, when he has done.

Sof. [*Earneſtly to* Phædra.] It was at that very door, there it is—here was one *I*, and there was t'other.

Phæd. What, you mean that you ſquinted, and look'd two ways at once.

Sof. I mean no ſuch thing—[*He now turns from her, and addreſſes* Alcmena.] It is not eaſy to make one's ſelf underſtood in theſe nice caſes: but I ſay, —hem! 'I ſay, that I being become the duplicate of 'myſelf, as to the body, and the underſtanding, did 'notwithſtanding find that there was a diverſity of the 'will, and that both in action and in ſufferance'——

Amph. [*Fiercely pulling him away.*] Be gone—thy folly tortures me to madneſs.

Alc. [*Interpoſing.*] The ſame ſtrange phrenſy has poſſeſs'd you both;

It was from you, not him, I heard the news.

Amph. From me!

Alc.

Alc. From you—and when you told me Pterelas's death,
You gave this jewel which he us'd to wear.

Amph. This is amazing!
Have I already given you thoſe diamonds,
The preſent I reſerv'd?

Alc. 'Tis an odd queſtion:
You ſee I wear 'em: look.

Amph. Now anſwer, Soſia.

Sof. Yes, now I can anſwer with a ſafe conſcience, as to that point; all the reſt may be art magic—— but, as for the diamonds, here they are, under ſafe cuſtody.

Alc. Then what are theſe upon my arm? [*To* Sof.

Sof. Flints, or pebbles, or ſome ſuch trumpery of enchanted ſtones. Yet now I think on't, madam, did not a certain friend of mine preſent 'em to you?

Alc. What friend?

Sof. Why another Soſia; one that made himſelf Soſia in my deſpite, and alſo Unſoſiated me.

Amph. Sirrah, leave your nauſeous nonſenſe; break open the ſeal, and take out the diamonds.

Sof. More words than one to a bargain, ſir, I thank you: that's no part of prudence for me to commit burglary upon the ſeals. Do you look firſt upon the ſignet, and tell me in your conſcience, whether the ſeals be not as firm as when you clapt the wax upon them.

Amph. The ſignature is firm. [*Looking.*

Sof. Then take the ſignature into your own cuſtody, and open it, for I will have nothing done at my proper peril. [*Giving him the caſket.*

Amph. [*Breaking open the ſeal.*] O Heav'ns! here's nothing but an empty ſpace, the neſt where they were laid.

Sof. Then if the birds are flown, the fault's not mine. Here has been fine conjuring work! or elſe the jewel, knowing to whom it ſhou'd be given, took occaſion to ſteal out, by a natural inſtinct, and ty'd itſelf to that pretty arm.

Amph. Can this be poſſible?

Sof.

Sof. Yes, very poſſible: You, my lord Amphitryon, may have brought forth another You my lord Amphitryon; as well as I Sofia have brought forth another Me Sofia; and our diamonds may have procreated theſe diamonds; and ſo we are all three double.

Phæd. If this be true, I hope my golden goblet has gigg'd another golden goblet, and then they may carry double upon all four. [*Aſide.*

Alc. My lord, I have ſtood ſilent out of wonder What you cou'd wonder at.

Amph. [*Aſide.*] A chilling ſweat, a damp of jealouſy, Hangs on my brows, and clams upon my limbs. I fear, and yet I muſt be ſatisfy'd: And to be ſatisfy'd, I muſt diſſemble.

Alc. Why muſe you ſo, and murmur to yourſelf? If you repent your bounty, take it back.

Amph. Not ſo; but, if you pleaſe, relate what paſt At our laſt interview.

Alc. That queſtion wou'd infer you were not here.

Amph. I ſay not ſo; I only wou'd refreſh my memory, And have my reaſons to deſire the ſtory.

Alc. The ſtory is not long: you know I met you, Kiſs'd you, and preſs'd you cloſe within my arms.

Amph. I cou'd have ſpar'd that kindneſs. [*Aſide.* And what did I? [*To her.*

Alc. With equal love return'd my warm embrace.

Amph. Go on.——— [*Aſide.*] And ſtab me with each ſyllable thou ſpeak'ſt.

Alc. I have no more to ſay.

'*Amph.* Why, went we not to bed?

'*Alc.* Why not?

' Is it a crime for huſband and for wife

' To go to bed, my lord?'

Amph. Perfidious woman!

Alc. Ungrateful man!

Amph. She juſtifies it too!

Alc. I need not juſtify: of what am I accus'd?

Amph. Of that prodigality of kindneſs Giv'n to another, and uſurp'd from me. So bleſs me, Heav'n, if ſince my firſt departure, I ever ſet my foot upon this threſhold.

Alc.

Alc. Then I, it ſeems, am falſe!

Amph. As ſurely falſe, as what thou ſay'ſt is true.

Alc. I have betray'd my honour, and my love!
And am a foul adultreſs!

Amph. What thou art,
Thou ſtand'ſt condemn'd to be by thy relation.

Alc. Go, thou unworthy man; for ever go:
No more my huſband! Go, thou baſe impoſtor;
Who tak'ſt a vile pretence to taint my fame;
And, not content to leave, would'ſt ruin me.
Enjoy thy wiſh'd divorce: I will not plead
My innocence of this pretended crime:
I need not: do thy worſt, I fear thee not:
For know, the more thou wou'dſt expoſe my virtue,
Like pureſt linen laid in open air,
'Twill bleach the more, and whiten to the view.

Amph. 'Tis well thou art prepar'd for thy divorce:
For, know thou too, that after this affront,
This foul indignity done to my honour,
Divorcement is but petty reparation.
But ſince thou haſt, with impudence, affirm'd
My falſe return, and brib'd my ſlaves to vouch it,
The truth ſhall, in the face of Thebes, be clear'd;
Thy uncle, the companion of my voyage,
And all the crew of ſeamen ſhall be brought,
Who were embark'd, and came with me to land,
Nor parted, till I reach'd this curſed door:
So ſhall this viſion of my late return
Stand a detected lye; and woe to thoſe
Who thus betray'd my honour.

Soſ. Sir, ſhall I wait on you?

Amph. No, I will go alone: expect me here:
[*Exit* Amphitryon.

Phæd. Pleaſe you——that I—— [*To* Alcmena.

Alc. O! nothing now can pleaſe me:
Darkneſs, and ſolitude, and ſighs, and tears,
And all th' inſeparable train of grief,
Attend my ſteps for ever—— [*Exit* Alcmena.

Soſ. What if I ſhou'd lye now, and ſay we have been here before? I never ſaw any good that came of telling truth. [*Aſide.*

Phæd.

Phæd. He makes no more advances to me: I begin a little to ſuſpect, that my gold goblet will prove but copper. [*Aſide.*

Soſ. Yes, 'tis reſolv'd—I will lye abominably, againſt the light of my own conſcience. For ſuppoſe the other Soſia has been here: perhaps that ſtrong dog has not only beaten me, but alſo has miſus'd my wife! Now, by aſking certain queſtions of her, with a ſide-wind, I may come to underſtand how ſquares go, and whether my nuptial bed be violated. [*Aſide.*

Phæd. Moſt certainly he has learn'd impudence of his maſter, and will deny his being here; but that ſhall not ſerve his turn, to cheat me of my preſent— [*Aſide.*

Why, Soſia! What in a brown ſtudy?

Soſ. A little *cogitabund*, or ſo, concerning this diſmal revolution in our family.

Phæd. But that ſhou'd not make you neglect your duty to me your miſtreſs.

Soſ. Pretty ſoul, I wou'd thou wert; upon condition that old Bromia were ſix foot under ground.

Phæd. What! is all your hot courtſhip to me dwindled into a poor unprofitable wiſh? You may remember, I did not bid you abſolutely deſpair.

Soſ. No, for all things yet may be accommodated in an amicable manner, betwixt my maſter and my lady.

Phæd. I mean, to the buſineſs betwixt you and me———

Soſ. Why, I hope we two never quarrell'd.

Phæd. Muſt I remember you of a certain promiſe that you made me at our laſt parting?

Soſ. O, when I went to the army; that I ſhou'd ſtill be praiſing thy beauty to judge Gripus, and keep up his affections to thee.

Phæd. No, I mean the buſineſs betwixt you and me this morning—that you promis'd me——

Soſ. That I promis'd thee—I find it now: that ſtrong dog, my brother Soſia, has been here before me, and made love to her. [*Aſide.*

Phæd. You are conſidering, whether or no you ſhould keep your promiſe——

Soſ.

Sof. No, ſweet creature, the promiſe ſhall not be broken: but what I have undertaken, I will perform like a man of honour.

Phæd. Then you remember the preliminaries of the preſent.——

Sof. Yes, yes, in groſs I do remember ſomething; but this diſturbance of the family has ſomewhat ſtupify'd my memory: ſome pretty *quelque choſe*, I warrant thee; ſome acceptable toy of ſmall value.

Phæd. You may call a gold goblet a toy: but I put a greater value upon your preſents.

Sof. A gold goblet, ſay'ſt thou! Yes, now, I think on't, it was a kind of a gold goblet, as a gratuity—

Phæd. No, no; I had rather make ſure of one bribe before-hand, than be promis'd ten gratuities.

Sof. Yes, now I remember, it was, in ſome ſenſe, a gold goblet, by way of earneſt; and it contain'd—

Phæd. One large————

Sof. How, one large——

Phæd. Gallon.

Sof. No, that was ſomewhat too large, in conſcience: it was not a whole gallon; but it may contain, reaſonably ſpeaking, one large——thimble-full. But gallons and thimble-fulls are ſo like, that, in ſpeaking, I might eaſily miſtake them.

'*Phæd.* Is it come to this? Out, traitor!

'*Sof.* I had been a traitor, indeed, to have betray'd 'thee to the ſwallowing of a gallon; but a thim-'ble-full of cordial-water is eaſily ſipt off: and then, 'this ſame goblet is ſo very light too, that it will be 'no burden to carry it about with thee in thy pocket.'

Phæd. O apoſtate to thy love! O perjur'd villain! [*Enter* Bromia.] What are you here, Bromia! I was telling him his own: I was giving him a rattle for his treacheries to you, his love: you ſee I can be a friend, upon occaſion.

Brom. Ay chicken, I never doubted of thy kindneſs: but for this fugitive—this rebel—this miſcreant————

Sof. A kind welcome to an abſent lover, as I have been.

Brom.

Brom. Ay, and a kind greeting you gave me, at your return; when you us'd me ſo barbarouſly this morning.

Soſ. Ay, the t'other Soſia has been with her too; and has us'd her barbarouſly: barbarouſly, that is to ſay uncivilly; and uncivilly, I am afraid that means too civilly. [*Aſide.*

Phæd. You had beſt deny you were here this morning! And by the ſame token——

Soſ. Nay, no more tokens, for Heav'n's ſake, dear Phædra. Now muſt I again ponder with myſelf a little, whether it be better for me to have been here, or not to have been here this morning. [*Aſide.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Phædra, my lord's without; and will not enter till he has firſt ſpoken with you. [*Exit Servant.*

Phæd. [*To him in private.*] O, that I cou'd ſtay, to help to worry thee for this abuſe; but the beſt on't is, I leave thee in good hands——Farewel thimble—To him, Bromia. [*Exit* Phædra.

Brom. No, to be ſure you did not beat me, and put me into a ſwoon, and deprive me of the natural uſe of my tongue, for a long half hour: you did not beat me down with your little wand: but I ſhall teach you to uſe your rod another time——I ſhall

Soſ. Put her into a ſwoon with my little wand, and ſo forth: that's more than ever I could do. Theſe are terrible circumſtances, that ſome Soſia or other has been here. [*Aſide.*] Well, but Bromia—if I did beat thee down with my little wand, I warrant, I was monſtrous kind to thee 'afterwards.'

Brom. Yes, monſtrous kind indeed! You never ſaid a truer word; for when I came to kiſs you, you pull'd away your mouth, and turn'd your cheek to me.

Soſ. Good.

Brom. How, good! Here's fine impudence: what, do you inſult upon me too?

Soſ. No, I do not inſult upon you—but for a certain reaſon, that I beſt know, I am glad that matter ended ſo fairly and peaceably betwixt us.

Brom.

Brom. Yes, 'twas very fair and peaceably; to ſtrike a woman down, and beat her moſt outrageouſly.

Soſ. Is it poſſible that I drubb'd thee?

Brom. I find your drift——You wou'd fain be provoking me to a new trial now: but i'faith, you ſhall bring me to no more handy-blows—I ſhall make bold to truſt to my tongue hereafter. You never durſt have offer'd to hold up a finger againſt me, till you went a trooping.

Soſ. Then I am conqueror; and I laud my own courage. This renown I have atchiev'd by ſoldierſhip and ſtratagem. Know your duty, ſpouſe, henceforward, to your ſupreme commander. [*Strutting.*

Enter Jupiter *and* Phædra.

Phæd. Indeed I wonder'd at your quick return.

Jup. Ev'n ſo, Almighty Love wou'd have it, Phædra;

'And the ſtern Goddeſs of ſweet-bitter cares,
'Who bows our necks beneath her brazen yoke,'
I wou'd have mann'd my heart, and held it out:
But, when I thought of what I had poſſeſt;
Thoſe joys, that never end but to begin,
My duty ſoon was overborne: I ſcorn'd
The buſy malice of cenſorious tongues,
And, careleſs to conceal my ſtolen journey,
Determin'd one day more to ſpend in Thebes.

Phæd. And yet a ſecond time you left Alcmena,
With looks unkind, that threaten'd longer abſence.
'Twas but ev'n now———

Jup. Wou'd it had never been!
I die to make my peace.

Phæd. 'Tis difficult.

Jup. But nothing is impoſſible to love:
To love like mine: for I have prov'd its force.
If I ſubmit, there's hope.

Phæd. It is poſſible I may ſolicit for you.

Jup. But wilt thou promiſe me to do thy beſt?

Phæd. Nay, I promiſe nothing—unleſs you begin
To promiſe firſt. [*Curt'ſying.*

Jup. I wo'not be ungrateful.

Phæd. Well, I'll try to bring her to you.

Jup.

Jup. That's all I aſk:
And I will ſo reward thee, gentle Phædra——

Phæd. What with the ſweet ſound of gentle Phædra, and my kind advocate.——

Jup. No, there's a ſound will pleaſe thee better.
[*Throwing her a purſe.*

Phæd. Ay, there's ſomething of melody in this ſound.
I could dance all day to the muſic of *chink, chink.*
[*Exit* Phæd.

Jup. Go, Soſia,
To Polidas, to Tranio, and to Gripus,
Companions of our war: invite 'em all
To join their pray'rs to ſmooth Alcmena's brow;
And, with a ſolemn feaſt, to crown the day.

Soſ. [*Taking* Jupiter *about the knees.*] Let me embrace you, ſir.—[Jupiter *puſhes him away.*] Nay, you muſt give me leave to expreſs my gratitude. I have not eaten, to ſay eating, nor drunk, to ſay drinking, never ſince our villainous encamping ſo near the enemy.

Jup. You, Bromia, ſee that all things be prepar'd
With that magnificence, as if Jupiter
Were gueſt or maſter here.

Soſ. Or, rather, as much as if twenty Jupiters were to be gueſts, or maſters here.

Brom. That you may eat for to-day and to-morrow.

Soſ. Or, rather again, for to-day, and yeſterday; and as many months backward, as I am indebted to my own ſtomach.

Jup. Away, both of you.
[*Exeunt* Soſia *and* Bromia *ſeverally.*
Now I have pack'd him hence, thou other Soſia,
(Who, tho' thou art not preſent, hear'ſt my voice)
Be ready to attend me at my call,
And to ſupply his place.

Enter Mercury *to* Jupiter; Alcmena *and* Phædra *alſo enter, but* Alcmena *ſeeing* Jupiter, *turns back, and retires frowning.*

Jup. See, ſhe appears! [*Seeing* Alcmena
O ſtay.

Merc. She's gone, and ſeem'd to frown at parting.

Jup. Follow, and thou ſhalt ſee her ſoon appeas'd;
For I, who made her, know her inward ſtate:
No woman, once well-pleas'd, can throughly hate.
I gave 'em Beauty, to ſubdue the Strong;
(A mighty empire, but it laſts not long.)
I gave 'em Pride, to make Mankind their ſlave;
But, in exchange, to Men I Flattery gave.
Th' offending Lover, when he loweſt lies,
Submits to conquer, and but kneels, to riſe.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Jupiter *following* Alcmena; Mercury, *and* Phædra.

Jup. O Stay, my dear Alcmena, hear me ſpeak.
Alc. No, I wou'd fly thee to the ridge of earth;
And leap the precipice to 'ſcape thy ſight.
Jup. For pity———
Alc. Leave me, thou ungrateful man!
I hate myſelf, for having lov'd thee once.
Jup. Hate not the beſt and faireſt of your kind:
Nor can you hate your lover, tho' you wou'd.
Your tears, that fall ſo gently, are but grief:
There may be anger; but there muſt be love.
The dove that murmurs at her mate's neglect,
But counterfeits a coyneſs to be courted.
'*Alc.* Courtſhip from thee, and after ſuch affronts!
'*Jup.* Is this that everlaſting love you vow'd, laſt night?
'*Alc.* Think what thou wert, and who cou'd ſwear too much?
'Think what thou art, and that abſolves the oath.
'*Jup.* Can you forſake me for ſo ſmall a fault?
'Twas but a jeſt, perhaps too far purſu'd;
'Twas but, at moſt, a trial of your faith,
How you could bear unkindneſs:
'Twas but to get a reconciling kiſs,
A wanton ſtratagem of love.
'*Alc.* See how he doubles, like a hunted hare!
'A jeſt, and then a trial, and a bait;——

'*Jup.*'

'*Jup.*' Think me jealous, then.

Alc. O that I could, for that's a noble crime;
And which a lover can, with eaſe, forgive:
'Tis the high pulſe of paſſion, in a fever;
A ſickly draught but ſhews a burning thirſt:
Thine was a ſurfeit, not a jealouſy:
And in that loathing of thy ſatiate love,
Thou ſaw'ſt the odious object with diſdain.

Jup. O think not that: for you are ever new——
'Your fruits of love, like thoſe of endleſs ſpring
'In happy climes, where ſome are in the bud,
'Some green, and ripening ſome, while others fall.

'*Alc.* Ay, now you tell me this. Your puny paſſion,
'Like the deprav'd deſires of fretful ſickneſs,
'Raves in ſhort fits of craving and diſguſt:
'This morn at break of day you wou'd be gone;
'Then chang'd your purpoſe and came back; then raged
'Becauſe th' effect of chance was not foreſeen;
'Then left me in diſguſt, with inſult too;
'And now, return'd again, you talk of love.
'But never hope to be receiv'd again:
'You would again deny you were receiv'd,
'And brand my ſpotleſs fame.'

Jup. I will not dare to juſtify my crime:
No, I confeſs I have deſerv'd your hate.
Too charming fair, I kneel for your forgiveneſs:
I beg by thoſe fair eyes, [*Kneeling.*
Which gave me wounds that time can never cure;
Receive my ſorrows, and reſtore my joys.

Alc. Unkind and cruel! I can ſpeak no more.

Jup. O give it vent, Alcmena, give it vent;
I merit your reproach, I wou'd be curs'd:
Let your tongue curſe me, while your heart forgives.

'*Alc.* Can I forget ſuch uſage?

'*Jup.* Can you hate me?

'*Alc.* I'll do my beſt: for ſure I ought to hate you.

'*Jup.* That word was only hatch'd upon your tongue
'It came not from your heart. But try again;
'And if, once more, you can but ſay, I hate you,
'My ſword ſhall do you juſtice.

Alc.

'*Alc.* Then, I hate you——
'*Jup.* Then you pronounce the sentence of my death?
'*Alc.* I hate you much;—but yet I love you more.
'*Jup.* To prove that love, then say, that you for-give me:
'For there remains but this alternative;
'Resolve to pardon, or to punish me.
'*Alc.* Alas, what I resolve, appears too plain:
'In saying that I cannot hate, I pardon.
'*Jup.* But what's a pardon worth, without a seal?
'Permit me, in this transport of my joy——
'[*Kisses her hand.*'
Alc. Forbear; I am offended with myself,
[*Putting him gently away with her hand.*
That I have shewn this weakness——Let me go.
[*Going and looking back on him.*
But come not you;
Lest I should spoil you with excess of fondness,
And let you love again—— [*Exit* Alcmena.
Jup. Forbidding me to follow, she invites me.
[*Aside.*
This is the mould of which I made the sex:
I gave 'em but one tongue, to say us nay;
And two kind eyes, to grant. Be sure that none
[*To* Merc.
Approach, to interrupt us.
[*Exit* Jupiter *after* Alcmena.
Mercury *and* Phædra *remain.*

Merc. Your lady has made the challenge of reconciliation to my lord: here's a fair example for us two, Phædra.

Phæd. No example at all, Sosia: for my lady had the diamonds before-hand, and I have none of the gold goblet.

Merc. The goblet shall be forth-coming, if thou wilt give me weight for weight.

Phæd. Yes, and measure for measure too, Sosia: that is, for a thimble-full of gold, a thimble-full of love.

Merc. What think you now, Phædra? Here's a weighty argument of love for you!
[*Pulling out the goblet in a case from under his cloak.*

Phæd. Now Jupiter of his mercy, let me kiſs thee, O thou dear metal! [*Taking it in both hands.*

Merc. And Venus, of her mercy, let me kiſs thee, dear, dear Phædra.

Phæd. Not ſo faſt, Soſia! there's an unlucky proverb in your way—*Many things happen betwixt the cup and the lip*, you know.

Merc. Why, thou wilt not cheat me of my goblet?

Phæd. Yes; 'as ſure as you would cheat me of my 'maidenhead:' I am yet but juſt even with you, for the laſt trick you play'd me. And, beſides, this is but a bare retaining fee; you muſt give me another before the cauſe is open'd.

Merc. Shall I not come to your bed-ſide to-night?

Phæd. No, nor to-morrow night neither: but this ſhall be my ſweetheart in your place: 'tis a better bedfellow, and will keep me warmer in cold weather. [*Exit* Phædra.

Mercury *alone.*

Merc. Now, what's the God of Wit in a woman's hand? This very goblet I ſtole from Gripus; and he got it out of bribes too. But this is the common fate of ill-gotten goods, that, as they came in by covetouſneſs, they go out by whoring.——[*Enter* Amphitryon.]——'O here's Amphitryon again, but I'll 'manage him above in the balcony.' [*Exit* Merc.

Amph. Not one of thoſe I look'd for, to be found!
Has ſome enchantment hid 'em from my ſight?
Perhaps, as Soſia ſays, 'tis witchcraft all:
Seals may be open'd, diamonds may be ſtoln;
But how I came in perſon, yeſterday,
And gave that preſent to Alcmena's hands,
That which I never gave, nor ever came,
O there's the rock, on which my reaſon ſplits.
Wou'd that were all! I fear my honour, too!
I'll try her once again: ſhe may be mad:——
A wretched remedy! but all I have,
To keep me from deſpair.
How now! what means the locking up of my
Doors at this time of day? [*Knocks.*

Merc. [*Above.*] Softly, friend, ſoftly! You knock as

as loud, and as saucily, as a lord's footman, that was sent before him, to warn the family of his lordship's visit. Sure, you think the doors have no feeling! What the devil are you that rap with such authority?

Amph. Look out, and see: 'tis I.

Merc. You? what you?

Amph. No more, I say, but open.

Merc. I'll know to whom first.

Amph. I am one that can command the doors open.

Merc. Then you had best command them, and try whether they will obey you.

Amph. Dost thou not know me?

Merc. Pr'ythee, how should I know thee? dost thou take me for a conjurer?

Amph. What's this, midsummer-moon? Is all the world gone a madding? Why Sosia!

Merc. That's my name indeed: didst thou think I had forgot it?

Amph. Dost thou see me?

Merc. Why, dost thou pretend to go invisible? If thou hast any business here, dispatch it quickly; I have no leisure to throw away upon such prattling companions.

Amph. Thy companion, slave? How dar'st thou use this insolent language to thy master?

Merc. How! Thou my master? By what title? I never had any other master, but Amphitryon.

Amph. Well: and for whom dost thou take me?

Merc. For some rogue or other; but what rogue I know not.

Amph. Dost thou not know me for Amphitryon, slave!

Merc. How shou'd I know thee, when I see thou dost not know thyself? Thou Amphitryon? In what tavern hast thou been? and how many bottles did thy business, to metamorphose thee into my lord?

Amph. I will so drub thee for this insolence!

Merc. How now, impudence! are you threatening your betters? I shou'd bring you to condign punishment, but that I have a great respect for the good wine, tho' I find it in a fool's noddle.

Amph. What, none to let me in? Why Phædra! Bromia!

Merc. Peace, fellow; if my wife hears thee, we are both undone. At a word, Phædra and Bromia are very busy; and my lady and my lord must not be disturbed.

Amph. Amazement seizes me!

Merc. At what art thou amaz'd? My Lord Amphitryon and my Lady Alcmena had a falling out, and are retir'd, without seconds, to decide the quarrel. If thou wert not a meddlesome fool, thou wouldst not be thrusting thy nose into other peoples matters. Get thee about thy business, if thou hast any; for I'll hear no more of thee. [*Exit* Mercury *from above.*

Amph. Brav'd by my slave, dishonour'd by my wife!
To what a desp'rate plunge am I reduc'd,
If this be true the villain says? But why
That feeble If? It must be true; she owns it.
Now, whether to conceal, or blaze th' affront?
One way, I spread my infamy abroad;
And, 'tother, hide a burning coal within,
That preys upon my vitals: I can fix
On nothing, but on vengeance.

Enter to him Sosia, Polidas, Gripus, *and* Tranio.

Grip. Yonder he is; walking hastily to and fro, before his door; like a citizen, clapping his sides before his shop, in a frosty morning: 'tis to catch a stomach, I believe.

Sos. I begin to be afraid, that he has more stomach to my sides and shoulders, than to his own victuals. How he shakes his head! and stamps! and what strides he fetches! He's in one of his damn'd moods again: I don't like the looks of him.

Amph. Oh, my mannerly, fair spoken, obedient slave, are you there! I can reach you now, without climbing: Now we shall try who's drunk, and who's sober.

Sos. Why this is as it should be: I was somewhat suspicious that you were in a pestilent humour. Yes, we will have a crash at the bottle, when your lordship pleases: I have summon'd 'em, you see: and they are notable topers, especially Judge Gripus.

Grip.

Grip. Yes, faith; I never refuſe my glaſs, in a good quarrel.

Amph. [*To* Sof.] Why, thou inſolent villain; I'll teach a ſlave how to uſe his maſter thus.

Sof. Here's a fine buſineſs towards! I am ſure I ran as faſt as ever my legs could carry me, to call 'em: nay, you may truſt my diligence, in all affairs belonging to the belly.

Grip. He has been very faithful to his commiſſion, I'll bear him witneſs.

Amph. How can you be witneſs where you were not preſent? the balcony! ſirrah, the balcony!

Sof. Why, to my beſt remembrance, you never invited the balcony.

Amph. What nonſenſe doſt thou plead for an excuſe of thy foul language, and thy baſe replies!

Sof. You fright a man out of his ſenſes, firſt; and blame him afterwards, for talking nonſenſe:—but 'tis better for me to talk nonſenſe, than for ſome to do nonſenſe: I will ſay that, whatever comes on't. Pray, ſir, let all things be done decently: what, I hope, when a man is to be hang'd, he is not truſs'd up on the gallows like a dumb dog, without telling him wherefore.

Amph. By your pardon, gentlemen; I have no longer patience to forbear him.

Sof. Juſtice, juſtice! my Lord Gripus; as you are a true magiſtrate, protect me. Here's a proceſs of beating going forward, without ſentence given.

Grip. My Lord Amphitryon, this muſt not be: let me firſt underſtand the demerits of the criminal.

Sof. Hold you to that point, I beſeech your honour; as you commiſerate the caſe of a poor, innocent malefactor.

Amph. To ſhut the door againſt me, in my very face! to deny me entrance! to brave me from the balcony! to laugh at me, to threaten me! what proofs of innocence call you theſe? But if I puniſh not this inſolence—[*Is going to beat him, and is held by* Polidas *and* Tranio.] I beg you let me go——

Sof. I charge you in the King's name, hold him faſt; for you ſee he's bloodily diſpos'd.

Grip. Now, what haſt thou to ſay for thyſelf, Soſia?

Soſ. I ſay, in the firſt place,—be ſure you hold him, gentlemen; for I ſhall never plead worth one farthing, while I am bodily afraid.

Pol. Speak boldly; I warrant thee.

Soſ. Then if I may ſpeak boldly, under my lord's favour,—I do not ſay he lies neither: no, I am too well bred for that; but his lordſhip fibbs moſt abominably.

Amph. Do you hear his impudence? yet will you let me go?

Soſ. No impudence at all, my lord: for how cou'd I, naturally ſpeaking, be in the balcony and affronting you; when at the ſame time I was in every ſtreet of Thebes, inviting theſe gentlemen to dinner?

Grip. Hold a little: how long ſince was it that he ſpoke to you, from the ſaid balcony?

Amph. Juſt now; not a minute before he brought you hither.

Soſ. Now ſpeak, my witneſſes.

Grip. I can anſwer for him, for this laſt half hour.

Pol. And I.

Tran. And I.

Soſ. Now judge equitably, gentlemen; whether I was not a civil well-bred perſon, to tell my lord he fibbs only?

Amph. Who gave that order, to invite 'em?

Soſ. He that beſt might; yourſelf. By the ſame token, you bid old Bromia provide and 'twere for a Jupiter; and I put in for a brace, or a leaſh; no, now I think on't, it was for ten couple of Jupiters, to make ſure of plenty.

Amph. When did I give thee this pretended commiſſion?

Soſ. Why, you gave me this pretended commiſſion juſt after you had given Phædra a purſe of gold to bring you and my lady together, that you might try to make up matters with her after your quarrel.

Amph. Where, in what place, did I give this order?

Soſ. Here, in this place, in the preſence of this very

very door, and of that balcony: and if they cou'd ſpeak, they wou'd both juſtify it.

Amph. O Heaven! theſe accidents are ſo ſurpriſing, the more I think of 'em, the more I am loſt in my imagination.

Grip. Nay, he has told us ſome paſſages, as he came along, that ſeem to ſurpaſs the power of nature.

Sof. What think you now, my lord, of a certain twin brother of mine, call'd Sofia? 'tis a ſly youth: pray Heaven you have not juſt ſuch another relation, within doors, call'd Amphitryon. It may be it was he that put upon me, in your likeneſs: and perhaps he may have put ſomething upon your lordſhip too, that may weigh heavy upon the forehead.

Amph. [*To theſe who hold him.*] Let me go——— Sofia may be innocent, and I will not hurt him: ——Open the door, I'll reſolve my doubts immediately.

Sof. The door is peremptory, that it will not be open'd without keys: and my brother, on the inſide, is in poſſeſſion; and will not part with 'em.

Amph. Then 'tis manifeſt that I am affronted; break open the door there.

Grip. Stir not a man of you to his aſſiſtance.

Amph. Doſt thou take part with my adultreſs too, becauſe ſhe is thy niece?

Grip. I take part with nothing but the law; and, to break the doors open, is to break the law.

Amph. Do thou command 'em then.

Grip. I command nothing without my warrant; and my clerk is not here to take his fees for drawing it.

Amph. [*Aſide.*] The devil take all juſtice-brokers: —I curſe him too when I have been hunting him all over the town, to be my witneſs!——But I'll bring ſoldiers to force open the doors by my own commiſſion.

[*Exit* Amphitryon.

Sof. Pox o' theſe forms of law, to defeat a man of a dinner, when he's ſharp ſet! 'tis againſt the privilege of a freeborn ſtomach; and is no leſs than ſubverſion of fundamentals.

[Jupiter *above in the balcony.*

Jup. O, my friends, I am sorry I have made you wait so long: you are welcome; and the door shall be open'd to you immediately. [*Exit* Jupiter.

Grip. Was not that Amphitryon?

Sos. Why, who shou'd it be else?

Grip. In all appearance it was he: but how got he thither?

Pol. In such a trice too!

Tran. And after he had just left us!

Grip. And so much alter'd, for the better, in his humour?

Sos. Here's such a company of foolish questions, when a man's hungry: you had best stay dinner till he has prov'd himself to be Amphitryon in form of law. But I'll make short work of that business: for I'll take mine oath 'tis he.

Grip. I should be glad it were.

Sos. How, glad it were! with your damn'd interrogatories—when you ought to be thankful, that so it is.

Grip. [*Aside.*] That I may see my mistress Phædra, and present her with my great gold goblet.

Sos. If this be not the true Amphitryon, I wish I may be kept without doors, fasting, and biting my own fingers for want of victuals; and that's a dreadful imprecation! I am for the inviting, and eating, and treating Amphitryon; I am sure 'tis he that is my lawfully begotten lord: and if you had an ounce of true justice in you, you ought to have laid hold on t'other Amphitryon, and committed him for a rogue, and an impostor, and a vagabond.

[*The door is opened:* Mercury *from within.*

Merc. Enter quickly, masters: the passage on the right-hand leads to the gallery, where my lord expects you——For I am call'd another way.

[Gripus, Tranio, *and* Polidas *go into the house.*

'*Sos.* I should know that voice, by a secret instinct: 'Tis a tongue of my family; and belongs to my brother Sosia—It must be so; for it carries a cudgelling 'kind of sound in it——But, put the worst—let me 'weigh this matter wisely—Here's a beating and a 'belly.

'belly-full, againſt no beating and no belly-full. 'The beating is bad; but the dinner is good: 'Now, not to be beaten, is but negatively good; 'but, not to fill my belly, is poſitively bad—Upon 'the whole matter, my final reſolution is, to take 'the good and the bad as they come together.'

Is entering: Mercury *meets him at the door.*

Merc. Whither now, you kitchen-ſcum? From whence this impudence, to enter here without permiſſion?

Sof. Moſt illuſtrious ſir! my ticket is my hunger. Shew the full bowels of your compaſſion, to the empty bowels of my famine.

Merc. Were you not charg'd to return no more? I'll cut you into quarters, and hang you upon the ſhambles.

Sof. You'll get but little credit by me: alas, ſir, I am but mere carrion! Brave Soſia, compaſſionate coward Soſia; and beat not thyſelf, in beating me.

Merc. Who gave you that privilege, ſirrah, to aſſume my name? Have you not been ſufficiently warn'd of it; and receiv'd part of puniſhment already?

Sof. May it pleaſe you, ſir, the name is big enough for both of us. I would have obey'd you, and quitted my title to it; but, wherever I come, the malicious world will call me Soſia, in ſpite of me. I am ſenſible there are two Amphitryons; and why may not there be two Soſia's? Let thoſe two cut one another's throats at their own pleaſure; but you and I will be wiſer, by my conſent, and hold good intelligence together.

Merc. No, no: two Soſia's would make but two fools.

Sof. Then let me be the fool, and be you the prudent perſon; and chooſe for yourſelf ſome wiſer name: or you ſhall be the eldeſt brother; and I'll be content to be the younger, tho' I loſe my inheritance.

Merc. I tell thee, I am the only ſon of our family.

Sof. Ah! then let me be your baſtard brother, and the ſon of a whore—I hope that's but reaſonable.

Merc. No, thou ſhalt not diſgrace my father: for there are few baſtards now-a-days worth owning.

Soſ. Ah! poor Soſia! What will become of thee?

Merc. Yet again profanely uſing my proper name?

Soſ. I did not mean myſelf—I was thinking of another Soſia, a poor fellow, that was once of my acquaintance, unfortunately baniſh'd out of doors, when dinner was juſt coming upon the table.

Enter Phædra.

Phæd. Soſia, you and I muſt—Bleſs me! what have we here—a couple of you! or do I ſee double?

Soſ. I would fain bring it about, that I might make one of 'em: but he's unreaſonable, and will needs incorporate me, and ſwallow me whole into himſelf. If he would be content to be but one and a half, 'twould never grieve me.

Merc. 'Tis a perverſe raſcal! I kick him and cudgel him to no purpoſe; for ſtill he's obſtinate to ſtick to me: and I can never beat him out of my reſemblance.

Phæd. Which of you two is Soſia? for t'other muſt be the devil.

Soſ. You had beſt aſk him, that has play'd the devil with my back and ſides.

Merc. You had beſt aſk him, who gave you the gold goblet.

Phæd. No, that's already given: but he ſhall be my Soſia that will give me ſuch another.

Merc. I find you have been interloping, ſirrah.

Soſ. No, indeed, ſir! I only promis'd her a gold thimble; which was as much as comes to my proportion of being Soſia.

Phæd. This is no Soſia for my money: beat him away, t'other Soſia; he grows inſufferable.

Soſ. [*Aſide.*] Wou'd I were valiant, that I might beat him away: and ſucceed him at the dinner, for a pragmatical ſon of a whore, as he is——

Merc. What's that you are muttering betwixt your teeth, of a ſon of a whore, ſirrah?

Soſ. I am ſure I meant you no offence; for, if I am not Soſia, I am the ſon of a whore, for ought I know: and,

and, if you are Sosia, you may be the son of a whore, for ought you know.

Merc. Whatever I am, I will be Sosia, as long as I please: and whenever you visit me, you shall be sure of the civility of the cudgel.

Sos. If you will promise to beat me into the house, you may begin when you please with me: but to be beaten out of the house, at dinner-time, flesh and blood can never bear it.

[Mercury *beats him about: and* Sosia *is still making towards the door: but* Mercury *gets betwixt; and at length drives him off the stage.*

Phæd. In the name of wonder, what are you that are Sosia, and are not Sosia?

Merc. If thou wouldst know more of me, my person is freely at thy disposing.

Phæd. Then I dispose of it to you again; for 'tis so ugly, 'tis not for my use.

Merc. I can be ugly or handsome as I please; go to bed old, and rise young. I have so many suits of persons by me, I can shift 'em when I will.

Phæd. You are a fool then, to put on your worst clothes, when you come a wooing.

Merc. Go to; ask no more questions. I am for thy turn; for I know thy heart, and see all thou hast about thee. In thy right pocket——let me see—three love-letters from Judge Gripus, written to the bottom, on three sides; full of fustian passion, and hearty nonsense: as also in the same pocket, a letter of thine intended to him; consisting of nine lines and a half, scrawl'd and false spell'd, to shew thou art a woman.

Phæd. Is the devil in you, to see all this? Now, for Heaven's sake, do not look in t'other pocket—

Merc. Nay, there's nothing there, but a bawdy lampoon, and——

Phæd. [*Giving a great shriek.*] Look no farther, I beseech you—

Merc. And a silver spoon—

Phæd. [*Shrieking.*] Ah!

Merc. Which you purloin'd last night from Bromia.

Phæd. Keep my counsel, or I am undone for ever.
[*Holding up her hands to him.*

Merc. No: I'll mortify thee, now I have an handle to thy iniquity, if thou wilt not love me——

Phæd. Well, if you'll promise me to be secret, I will love you: because indeed I dare do no other.

Merc. 'Tis a good girl—I will be secret; and further, I will be assisting to thee in thy filching: for thou and I were born under the same planet.

Phæd. And we shall come to the same end too, I'm afraid.

Merc. No, no; since thou hast wit enough already to cozen a judge, thou needst never fear hanging.

Phæd. And will you make yourself a younger man, and be handsome too, and rich? for you that know hearts, must needs know, that I shall never be constant to such an ugly old Sosia.

Merc. As to my youth and beauty, you shall know more of that another time. But, prithee, why art thou so covetous of riches?

Phæd. Why, because riches will procure every thing else that I can wish for.

Merc. But what if every thing else could be procur'd without riches: would not that do as well?

Phæd. Why no; there's a pleasure, methinks, in having the money before one lays it out.

Merc. And yet, 'till it is laid out, it is as useless as so much dirt.

Phæd. Aye—that may be—but when my heart dances to the chinking of money, it is not at leisure to think of that.

Merc. But suppose, that, without money, you could procure all that money could buy and more.

Phæd. Why, as well as I love money, I have no objection to any good thing that money won't buy: but pray how is it to be had?

Merc. To be had? why, upon the easiest terms in the world; only by a motion of the finger, or a stamp with the foot.

Phæd. Phoo, that's impossible.

Merc. You shall make the experiment.

Phæd.

Phæd. Shall I? ſo I will then, this minute. Muſt I ſtamp with my foot, or beckon with my finger?

Merc. Firſt try to find out what you wiſh for, which I have known a difficult taſk for a woman.

Phæd. Let me ſee——

Merc. Come, I'll help you—If you had been put into poſſeſſion of Gripus's wealth yeſterday, what would you have had to entertain you to-day?

Phæd. Why, I wou'd have had——let me ſee——I wou'd have had, juſt now, a band of the beſt muſic in Thebes, and a ſong in the character of Plutus in praiſe of money.

Merc. Well, now ſtamp with your foot.

[Phædra *ſtamps*; *the muſic ſtrikes up*; *ſhe ſtarts and ſcreams out.*

Merc. Nay, nay, don't ſpoil the muſic—there's a friend of mine in the character of Plutus juſt coming in.

Phæd. I am very much oblig'd to you and your friend; but, if you pleaſe, I had rather keep a little farther out of his reach.

Merc. Pſhaw, pſhaw, ſtay where you are; my friends hurt nobody without my leave.

Enter Plutus, *who ſings the following ſong.*

Away with the fables philoſophers hold,
Of pleaſure that honeſty gains without gold:
To be rich is the bleſſings of life to ſecure;
And the man muſt be certainly wretched that's poor.

The virtue that claims all the Gods for its friends,
On Gold, mighty Gold, for exiſtence depends:
What wrongs, without Gold, can a mortal redreſs?
Or who, without Gold, can get bleſſings, or bleſs?

The Weak can you ſuccour, the Worthy reward,
If Money be wanting, the gift and the guard?
In Gold there is *ſtrength* which no foe can withſtand;
It conquers and triumphs, by ſea and by land.

In Gold there are *charms*; for youth and the fair,
Sigh one for an heireſs, and one for an heir.
There's *ſenſe*; for each circle that liſtens demure,
Conſents with a grin, and cries "Yes to be ſure!"
To be rich, if you truſt your own ears and your eyes,
Is at once to be *ſtrong*, to be *fair*, to be *wiſe*.

Phæd. There's for you now—what have you to ſay to that?

Merc. Why, Wit ſhall reply for me; and, to mortify you the more, it ſhall be in the character of a woman.

Phæd. [*To* Plutus, *who is going.*] Stay then, Mr. Plutus, if you pleaſe——let's hear what he'll ſay by way of reply.

Merc. That's but an ill-natur'd experiment; for Wit and Wealth have no kindneſs for one another: however, it ſhall be as you pleaſe for once.

[Mercury *waves his caduceus*; *a nymph enters in the character of Wit.*]

SONG.

Plutus, vain is all your vaunting,
Wit muſt life with bliſs ſupply.
Gold, alas! ſhould Wit be wanting,
Wou'd not find a joy to buy.

Wit alone creates the bleſſing,
Which, exchang'd for Gold, you ſhare:
Steril Gold alone poſſeſſing,
What has Man but gloom and care?

Wit, of ev'ry art deviſer,
Ev'ry paſſion can controll:
Can to Pity move the miſer,
Can with mirth dilate his ſoul.

Gold itſelf, on Wit depending,
Thence derives its utmoſt pow'r:
Folly all profuſely ſpending,
Folly hoarding all is poor.

Phæd. To her, Mr. Plutus.

DUET.

Plut. In vain wou'd your jargon our ſenſes bewitch,
D'ye tell me that Gold will not make a man rich?
Wit. It is Wit, Wit alone, that can keep it or uſe;
And it cannot enrich thoſe that hide it or loſe.
Plut. Your quibbles I ſcorn.
Wit. But you cannot reply.
Plut. I boldly affirm——
Wit. What I boldly deny.
Plut. I'll bet you ten millions.
Wit. No wagers I lay.
Plut. You dare not.
Wit. I ſcorn you.
Plut. I hate you.
Wit. Away.
Plut. I go—may great Jove in his mercy decree,
That we never may meet, ſince we ne'er can agree.
Wit. Go you to the Fooliſh.
Plut. And you to the Poor.
Wit. The Poor I can bleſs, and their bleſſings ſecure. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

Phæd. Well, for all theſe fine promiſes of Wit, I have no great opinion of the happineſs of poverty.

Merc. If you will not yield to argument, let Experiment convince you.

[*Strikes the ſcene with his caduceus, and it changes to a rural proſpect, with a dance of peaſants to country muſic.*]

Merc. Well, what think you, Phædra—are theſe people happy?

Phæd. If they are happy, they owe their happineſs as little to Wit as to Money, I believe.

Merc. I beg your pardon—if it had not been for the arts that Wit has invented, they would have had neither pipe nor dance: and mere eaſe and content are but negative happineſs at the beſt.

Phæd. Well, I find 'tis in vain to diſpute with you; but I ſhall hold my opinion for all that. Adieu—if you make me happy according to my way of thinking, perhaps I may make you happy according to yours. [*Exit.*

Merc.

Merc. Woman—mere woman!—however, I love thee but as mere woman, and only as mere woman thou art mine.

Such bargain-loves as I with Phædra treat,
Are all the leagues and friendſhip of the great.
Our Iron Age is grown an age of gold:
'Tis who bids moſt—for all men wou'd be ſold.

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

Enter Gripus *and* Phædra. Gripus *has the goblet in his hand.*

Phæd. YOU will not be ſo baſe to take it from me?

Grip. 'Tis my proper chattel: and I'll ſeize my own, in whatever hands I find it.

Phæd. You know I only ſhew'd it you to provoke your generoſity, that you might out-bid your rival with a better preſent.

Grip. My rival is a thief: and I'll indict you for a receiver of ſtol'n goods.

Phæd. Thou hide-bound lover!

Grip. Thou very mercenary miſtreſs!

Phæd. Thou moſt mercenary magiſtrate!

Grip. Thou ſeller of thyſelf!

Phæd. Thou ſeller of other people! Thou weather-cock of government: that when the wind blows for the ſubject, point'ſt to privilege; and when it changes for the ſovereign, veer'ſt to prerogative.

Grip. Will you compound, and take it as my preſent?

Phæd. No: but I'll ſend thy rival to force it from thee. [*Exit* Phædra.

Grip. When a thief is hangman to his judge, the hangman will ſoon decide the difference.

Enter Mercury, *with two ſwords.*

Merc. [*Bowing.*] Save your good lordſhip.

Grip.

Grip. From an impertinent coxcomb—I am out of humour, and am in haſte—Leave me.

Merc. 'Tis my duty to attend on your lordſhip, and to eaſe you of that indecent burden.

Grip. Gold was never any burden to one of my profeſſion.

Merc. By your lordſhip's permiſſion, Phædra has ſent me to take it from you.

Grip. What, by violence?

Merc. [*Still bowing.*] No; but by your honour's permiſſion, I am to reſtore it to her, and perſuade your lordſhip to renounce your pretenſions to her.

Grip. Tell her flatly, I will neither do one nor t'other.

Merc. O my good lord, I dare paſs my word for your free conſent to both.——Will your honour be pleas'd to take your choice of one of theſe?

Grip. Why theſe are ſwords: what have I to do with them?

Merc. Only to take your choice of one of them—— which your lordſhip pleaſes; and leave the other to your moſt obedient ſervant.

Grip. What, one of theſe ungodly weapons? Take notice, I'll lay you by the heels, ſirrah: this has the appearance of an unlawful bloody challenge.

Merc. You magiſtrates are pleaſed to call it ſo, my lord; but with us ſword-men, 'tis an honourable invitation to the cutting of one another's throats.

Grip. Be anſwer'd; I have no throat to cut. The law ſhall decide our controverſy.

Merc. By your permiſſion, my lord, it muſt be diſpatch'd this way.

Grip. I'll ſee thee hang'd before I give thee any ſuch permiſſion, to diſpatch me into another world.

Merc. At the leaſt, my lord, you have no occaſion to complain of my want of reſpect to you: you will neither reſtore the goblet, nor renounce Phædra: I offer you the combat; you refuſe it; all this is done in the forms of honour: It follows, that I am to affront, cudgel you, or kick you, at my own arbitrement;

ment; and I ſuppoſe, you are too honourable not to approve of my proceeding.

Grip. Here's a new ſort of proceſs, that was never heard of in any of our courts.

Merc. This, my good lord, is law in ſhort-hand; without your long preambles, and tedious repetitions, that ſignify nothing but to ſqueeze the ſubject: therefore, with your lordſhip's favour, I begin.

[*Fillips him under the chin.*

Grip. What's this for?

Merc. To give you an occaſion of returning me a box o' th' ear; that ſo, all things may proceed methodically.

Grip. I put in no anſwer, but ſuffer a non-ſuit.

Merc. No, my lord; for the coſts and charges are to be paid: will you pleaſe to reſtore the cup?

Grip. I have told thee, no.

Merc. Then from your chin, I muſt aſcend to your lordſhip's ears. [*Pulls his ears.*

Grip. Oh, oh, oh, oh.—Wilt thou never leave lugging me by the ears?

Merc. Not till your lordſhip will be pleas'd to hear reaſon. [*Pulling again.*

Grip. Take the cup, and the devil give thee joy on't.

Merc. [*Still holding him.*] And your lordſhip will farther be graciouſly pleaſed to releaſe all claims, titles, and actions whatſoever to Phædra: you muſt give me leave to add one ſmall memento, for that too. [*Pulling him again.*

Grip. I renounce her, I releaſe her.

Enter Phædra.

Merc. [*To her.*] Phædra, my lord has been pleas'd to be very gracious, without puſhing matters to extremity.

Phæd. I overheard it all. But give me livery and ſeiſin of the goblet, in the firſt place.

Merc. There's an act of oblivion ſhould be paſs'd too.

Phæd. Let him begin to remember quarrels when he

he dare; now I have him under my girdle, I'll cap verſes with him to the end of the chapter.

Enter Amphitryon *and guards.*

Amph. [*To Gripus.*] At laſt I have got poſſeſſion without your lordſhip's warrant: Phædra, tell Alcmena I am here.

Phæd. I'll carry no ſuch lying meſſage ——You are not here, and you cannot be here; for, to my knowledge, you are above with my lady, in the chamber.

Amph. All of a piece, and all witchcraft! Anſwer me preciſely; doſt thou not know me for Amphitryon?

Phæd. Anſwer me firſt: did you give me a diamond, and a purſe of gold?

Amph. Thou know'ſt I did not.

Phæd. Then, by the ſame token, I know you are not the true Amphitryon.

Amph. I'll undo this enchantment with my ſword, and kill the ſorcerer: come up, gentlemen, and follow me. [*To the guards.*

Phæd. I'll ſave you the labour, and call him down to confront you, if you dare attend him.

[*Exit* Phædra.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] Now the ſpell is ended, and Jupiter can enchant no more; or elſe Amphitryon had not enter'd ſo eaſily.——[Gripus *is ſtealing off.*] Whither now, Gripus? I have buſineſs for you. If you offer to ſtir, you know what follows.

Enter Jupiter, *follow'd by* Tranio *and* Polidas.

Jup. Who dares to play the maſter in my houſe?
What noiſe is this that calls me from above,
Invades my ſoft receſs,
And, like a tide, breaks in upon my love?

Amph. O Heav'ns, what's this I ſee?

Tran. What a prodigy!

Pol. How! Two Amphitryons!

Grip. I have beheld th' appearance of two ſuns,
But ſtill the falſe was dimmer than the true;
Here, both ſhine out alike.

Amph. This is a ſight, that, like the Gorgon's head,
Chills all my blood, and ſtiffens me to ſtone.
I need no more inquire into my fate;
For what I ſee reſolves my doubts too plain.

Tran.

Tran. Two drops of water cannot be more like.

Pol. They are two very ſames.

Merc. [*Aſide.*] Our Jupiter is a great comedian, he counterfeits moſt admirably.

Amph. Now I am gather'd back into myſelf;
My heart beats high, and puſhes out the blood,
[*Drawing his ſword.*
To give me juſt revenge on this impoſtor.
If you are brave, aſſiſt me [*To the guards.*]—Not one ſtirs!
What, are all brib'd to take th' enchanter's part?—
'Tis true, the work is mine; and thus——

[*Going to ruſh upon* Jupiter; *and is held by* Tranio *and* Polidas.

Pol. It muſt not be.

Jup. Give him his way: I dare the madman's worſt.
But ſtill take notice that it looks not like
The true Amphitryon, to fly out at firſt
To brutal force: it ſhews he doubts his cauſe,
Who dares not truſt his reaſon to defend it.

Amph. [*Struggling.*] Thou baſe uſurper of my name and bed!
No leſs than thy heart's blood can waſh away
Th' affronts I have ſuſtain'd.

Tran. We muſt not ſuffer
So ſtrange a duel, as Amphitryon
To fight againſt himſelf.

Pol. Nor think we wrong you, when we hold your hands:
We know our duty to our general;
We know the ties of friendſhip to our friend;
But who that friend, or who that gen'ral is,
Without more certain proofs betwixt you two,
Is hard to be diſtinguiſh'd by our reaſon,
Impoſſible by ſight.

Amph. I know it; and have ſatisfy'd myſelf,
I am the true Amphitryon.

Jup. See again,
He ſhuns the certain proofs; and dares not ſtand
Impartial judgment, and award of right.
But ſince Alcmena's honour is concern'd,
Whom, more than life and all the world, I love;

This

This I propose, as equal to us both.
Tranio and Polidas, be you assistants;
The guards be ready to secure th' impostor,
When once so prov'd, for public punishment;
And Gripus, be thou umpire of the cause.

Amph. I am content; let him proceed to examination.

Grip. [*Aside to Merc.*] On whose side wou'd you please that I shou'd give the sentence?

Merc. [*Aside to him.*] Follow thy conscience for once: but not to make a custom of it neither; nor to leave an evil precedent of uprightness to future judges——' [*Aside.*] 'Tis a good thing to have a magistrate under correction: your old fornicating judge 'dares never give sentence against him that knows 'his haunts.'

Pol. Your lordship knows I was master of Amphitryon's ship; and I desire to know of him, what pass'd in private betwixt us two at his landing, when he was just ready to engage the enemy?

Grip. Let the true Amphitryon answer first——

Jup. and Amph. together—My lord, I told him—

Grip. Peace both of you!—'Tis a plain case they are both true; for they both speak together: but for more certainty, let the false Amphitryon speak first.

Merc. Now they are both silent——

Grip. Then 'tis as plain on t'other side, that they are both false Amphitryons.

Merc. Which Amphitryon shall speak first?

Grip. Let the choleric Amphitryon speak: and let the peaceable hold his peace.

Amph. [*To Pol.*] You may remember that I whisper'd you, not to part from the stern, one single moment.

Pol. You did so.

Grip. No more words then: I proceed to sentence.

Jup. 'Twas I that whisper'd him; and he may remember I gave him this reason for it, that if our men were beaten, I might secure my own retreat.

Pol. You did so.

Grip. Now again he's as true as t'other.

Tran.

Tran. You know I was pay-master: what directions did you give me the night before the battle?

Grip. To which of the You's art thou speaking?

Amph. I order'd you to take particular care of the great bag.

Grip. Why this is demonstration.

Jup. The bag that I recommended to you was of tyger's skin; and mark'd Beta.

Grip. In sadness I think they are both jugglers: here's nothing, and here's nothing; and then *hiccius doccius*, and they are both here again.

Tran. You, peaceable Amphitryon, what money was there in that bag?

Jup. The sum, in gross, amounted just to fifty Attic talents.

Tran. To a farthing.

Grip. Paugh! Obvious, obvious.

Amph. Two thousand pieces of gold were ty'd up in a handkerchief by themselves.

Tran. I remember it.

Grip. Then 'tis dubious again.

Jup. But the rest was not all silver; for there were just four thousand brass halfpence.

Grip. Being but brass, the proof is inconsiderable: if they had been silver, it had gone on your side.

Amph. [*To Jup.*] Death and Hell, you will not persuade me that I did not kill Pterelas?

Jup. Nor you me that I did not enjoy Alcmena?

Amph. That last was poison to me—— [*Aside.*
Yet there's one proof thou canst not counterfeit:
In killing Pterelas, I had a wound
Full in the brawny part of my right arm;
Where still the scar remains: now blush, impostor,
For this thou canst not shew.

[*Bares his arm, and shews the scar, which they all look on.*

Omnes. This is the true Amphitryon.

Jup. May your lordship please——

Grip. No, sirrah, it does not please me: hold your tongue, for the case is manifest.

Jup. By your favour then, this shall speak for me.

[*Bares his arm, and shews it.*

Tran.

Tran. 'Tis juſt in the ſame muſcle.

Pol. Of the ſame length and breadth; and the ſcar of the ſame bluiſh colour.

Grip. [*To* Jup.] Did not I charge you not to ſpeak? 'Twas plain enough before: and now you have puzzled it again.

Amph. Good Gods, how can this be!

Grip. For certain there was but one Pterelas; and he muſt have been in the plot againſt himſelf too: for he was kill'd firſt by one of them; and then roſe again out of reſpect to t'other Amphitryon, to be kill'd twice over.

Enter Alcmena, Phædra, *and* Bromia.

Alc. [*Turning to* Phæd. *and* Bromia.] No more of this; it ſounds impoſſible,
That two ſhou'd be ſo like, no difference found.

Phæd. You'll find it true.

Alc. Then where's Alcmena's honour and her fame?——
Farewell my needleſs fear, it cannot be:
This is a caſe too nice for vulgar ſight——
But let me come, my heart will guide my eyes
To point, and tremble to its proper choice.
[*Seeing* Amphitryon, *goes to him.*
There neither was, nor is, but one Amphitryon;
And I am only his— [*Goes to take him by the hand.*

Amph. [*Puſhing her away from him.*] Away, adulteſs!

Jup. My gentle love, my treaſure, and my joy,
Follow no more that falſe and fooliſh fire,
That wou'd miſlead thy fame to ſure deſtruction!
Look on thy better huſband, and thy friend,
Who will not leave thee liable to ſcorn,
But vindicate thy honour from that wretch,
Who wou'd by baſe aſperſions blot thy virtue.

Alc. [*Going to him, who embraces her.*]
I was indeed miſtaken; thou art he!
Thy words, thy thoughts, thy ſoul is all Amphitryon.
Th' impoſtor has thy features, not thy mind;
The face might have deceiv'd me in my choice,
Thy kindneſs is a guide that cannot err.

Amph.

Amph. What, in my preſence to prefer the villain?
O execrable cheat! I break the truce;
And will no more attend your vain deciſions.
To this—and to the Gods I'll truſt my cauſe.

[*Is ruſhing upon* Jupiter, *and is held again.*

Jup. Poor man; how I contemn thoſe idle threats!
Were I diſpos'd, thou might'ſt as ſafely meet
The thunder launch'd from the red arm of Jove.
But in the face of Thebes, ſhe ſhall be clear'd;
And what I am, and what thou art, be known.
Attend, and I will bring convincing proofs.

Amph. Thou would'ſt elude my juſtice, and eſcape:
But I will follow thee thro' earth, and ſeas;
Nor hell ſhall hide thee from my juſt revenge.

Jup. I'll ſpare thy pains: it ſhall be quickly ſeen,
Betwixt us two, who ſeeks, and who avoids——
Come in, my friends—and thou who ſeem'ſt Amphitryon;
That all who are in doubt, may know the true.

[Jupiter *re-enters the houſe*; *with him* Amphitryon, Alcmena, Polidas, Tranio, *and guards.*

Merc. Thou, Gripus, and you, Bromia, ſtay with Phædra:

[*To* Grip. *and* Brom. *who are following.*

Let their affairs alone, and mind we ours.
Amphitryon's rival ſhall appear a God:
But know before-hand, I am Mercury;
Who want not heav'n, while Phædra is on earth.

Brom. But, an't pleaſe your lordſhip, is my fellow-ſervant, Phædra, to be exalted into the heav'ns, and made a ſtar?

Phæd. When that comes to paſs, if you look up a-nights, I ſhall remember old kindneſſes, and vouchſafe to twinkle on you.

Enter Sofia, *peeping about him, and ſeeing* Mercury, *is ſtarting back.*

Sof. Here he is again; and there's no paſſing by him into the houſe, unleſs I were a ſpright, to glide in thro' the key-hole.——I am to be a vagabond, I find.

Merc. Sofia, come back.

Sof.

Sof. No, I thank you—you may whiſtle me long enough; a beaten dog has always the wit to avoid his maſter.

Merc. I permit thee to be Soſia again.

Sof. 'Tis an unfortunate name, and I abandon it: he that has an itch to be beaten, let him take it up for Soſia;—what have I ſaid now! I mean for me; for I neither am, nor will be Soſia.

Merc. But thou may'ſt be ſo in ſafety: for I have acknowledg'd myſelf to be God Mercury.

Sof. I am your moſt humble ſervant, good Mr. Mercury. But how ſhall I be ſure that you will never aſſume my ſhape again?

Merc. Becauſe I am weary of wearing ſo villainous an outſide.

Sof. Well, well; as villainous as it is, here's old Bromia will be contented with it.

Brom. Yes, now I am ſure that I may chaſtiſe you ſafely.

Sof. Ay, but you had beſt take heed how you attempt it; for as Mercury has turn'd himſelf into me, ſo I may take the toy into my head, to turn myſelf into Mercury, that I may ſwinge you off condignly.

Merc. In the mean time be all my witneſſes, that I take Phædra for my wife of the left-hand; that is, in the nature of a lawful concubine.

Phæd. You ſhall pardon me for believing you, for all you are a God: for you have a terrible ill name below; and I'm afraid you'll get a footman, inſtead of a prieſt, to marry us.

Merc. But here's Gripus ſhall draw up articles betwixt us.

Phæd. But he's terribly us'd to falſe conveyancing—Well, be it ſo; for my counſel ſhall o'erlook 'em before I ſign. Come on, Gripus; that I may have him under black and white.

[*Here* Gripus *gets ready pen, ink, and paper.*

Merc. With all my heart.

Phæd. [*to* Grip.] Begin, begin. Heads of articles to be made, &c. betwixt Mercury, God of Thieves—

Merc. And Phædra, Queen of Gypſies—*Impri-*

mis, I promise to buy and settle upon her an estate, containing nine thousand acres of land, in any part of Bœotia, to her own liking.

Phæd. Provided always, that no part of the said nine thousand acres, shall be upon, or adjoining to Mount Parnassus; for I will not be fobb'd off with a poetical estate.

Merc. Memorandum, That she be always constant to me; and admit of no other lover.

Phæd. Memorandum, Unless it be a lover that offers more; and that the constancy shall not exceed the settlement.

Merc. Item, That she shall keep no male servants in her house.

Brom. Here's no provision made for children yet.

Phæd. Well remember'd, Bromia; I bargain that my eldest son shall be a hero, and my eldest daughter a king's mistress.

Merc. That is to say, a blockhead and a harlot, Phædra.

Phæd. That's true; but who dares call 'em so? Then for the younger children:—but now I think on't, we'll have no more, but master and miss; for the rest wou'd be but chargeable, and a burden to the nation.

Merc. Yes, yes; the second shall be a false prophet: he shall have wit enough to set up a new religion; and too much wit to die a martyr for it.

Phæd. O what had I forgot? there's pin-money, and alimony, and separate maintenance, and a thousand things more to be consider'd: that are all to be tack'd to this act of settlement.

Sos. I am a fool, I must confess—but yet I can see as far into a mill-stone as the best of you. I have observ'd, that you women-wits are commonly so quick upon the scent, that you often over-run it: now I wou'd ask of madam Phædra, that in case Mr. Mercury there shou'd be pleas'd to break these articles, in what court of judicature she intends to sue him?

Phæd. The fool has hit upon't——Gods and great

men are never to be sued; for they can always plead privilege; and therefore for once, Monsieur, I'll take your word; for as long as you love me, you'll be sure to keep it: and in the mean time I shall be gaining experience how to manage some rich cully; for no woman ever made her fortune by a wit.

[*It thunders; and the company within doors,* Amphitryon, Alcmena, Polidas, *and* Tranio, *all come running out, and join with the rest, who were on the Theatre before.*]

Amph. Sure 'tis some God! he vanish'd from our sight,
And told us we should see him soon return.

Alc. I know not what to hope, nor what to fear,
A simple error is a real crime;
And unconsenting innocence is lost.

[*A second peal of thunder; after which* Jupiter *appears in a machine.*]

Jup. Look up, Amphitryon, and behold above,
Th' impostor God, the rival of thy love:
In thy own shape, see Jupiter appear,
And let that sight secure thy jealous fear.
Disgrace, and infamy, are turn'd to boast;
No fame, in Jove's concurrence, can be lost:
What he enjoys, he sanctifies from vice;
And by partaking stamps into a price.

Merc. [*Aside.*] Amphitryon and Alcmena both stand mute, and know not how to take it.

Sos. [*Aside.*] Our sovereign lord Jupiter is a sly Companion; he knows how to gild a bitter pill.

Jup. From this auspicious night shall rise an heir,
Great like his sire, and like his mother fair:
Wrongs to redress, and tyrants to disseize;
Born for a world that wants a Hercules.
Monsters, and monster-men he shall engage,
And toil and struggle thro' an impious age.
Peace to his labours shall at length succeed;
And murm'ring men, unwilling to be freed,
Shall be compell'd to happiness, by need.

[Jupiter *is carry'd back to heaven.*

Omnes.

Omnes. We all congratulate Amphitryon.

Sof. Ah, Bromia, Bromia; if thou hadſt been as handſome and as young as Phædra! I ſay no more—but ſomebody might have made his fortunes as well as his maſter, and never the worſe man neither.

But—down, Ambition! let me not complain——
Enough that I am Soſia once again!
Tho' not a cuckold, yet content I'll be;
The great man's happineſs is not for me.
But of myſelf ſhall I be robb'd no more?—
Your voice, "ye learned Thebans," I implore—
Give me your ſuffrage, I'll be Soſia ſtill;
Let bully Merc'ry there do what he will.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

FINIS.

THE

DOUBLE DEALER.

A

COMEDY.

By Mr. CONGREVE.

Marked with the Variations in the

MANAGER's BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

LONDON:

Printed for T. DAVIES; T. LOWNDES; T. CASLON; W. NICOLL; and S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXXVII.

☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Lines 13, 14, in Page 7.

PROLOGUE.

MOORS *have this way (as ſtory tells) to know*
Whether their brats are truly got, or no;
Into the ſea, the new-born babe is thrown,
There as inſtinct directs, to ſwim, or drown.
A barbarous device, to try if ſpouſe
Has kept religiouſly her nuptial vows.

Such are the trials, poets make of plays:
Only they truſt to more inconſtant ſeas;
So does our author, this his child commit
To the tempeſtuous mercy of the pit,
To know if it be truly born of wit.

Criticks avaunt; for you are fiſh of prey,
And feed, like ſharks, upon an infant play,
Be ev'ry monſter of the deep away;
Let's have a fair trial, and a clear ſea.

Let Nature work, and do not damn too ſoon,
For life will ſtruggle long, ere it ſink down:
And will at leaſt riſe thrice, before it drown.
Let us conſider, had it been our fate,
Thus hardly to be prov'd legitimate!
I will not ſay, we'd all in danger been,
Were each to ſuffer for his mother's ſin:
But by my troth I cannot avoid thinking,
How nearly ſome good men might have 'ſcap'd ſinking.
But, Heav'n be prais'd, this cuſtom is confin'd
Alone to th' offspring of the Muſes kind:
Our chriſtian cuckolds are more bent to pity;
I know not one Moor-*huſband in the city.*
I'th' good man's arms the chopping baſtard thrives,
For he thinks all his own that is his wife's.

Whatever fate is for this play deſign'd,
The poet's ſure he ſhall ſome comfort find:
For if his Muſe has play'd him falſe, the worſt
That can befall him, is, to be divorc'd;
You huſbands judge, if that, be to be curs'd.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

	MEN.	AT COVENT-GARDEN.
Maſkwell,		Mr. AICKIN.
Lord Touchwood,		Mr. CLARKE.
Mellefont,		Mr. WROUGHTON.
Careleſs,		Mr. LEWIS.
Lord Froth,		Mr. BOOTH.
Briſk,		Mr. LEE LEWIS.
Sir Paul Plyant,		Mr. MACKLIN.
	WOMEN.	
Lady Touchwood,		Miſs JACKSON.
Cynthia,		Miſs LEESON.
Lady Froth,		Mrs. MATTOCKS.
Lady Plyant,		Miſs MACKLIN.

Chaplain, *Boy*, *Footmen*, and *Attendants*.

The SCENE, *a Gallery in Lord* Touchwood's *Houſe, with Chambers adjoining.*

THE

DOUBLE DEALER.

ACT. I.

Enter Careleſs, *croſſing the ſtage, with his hat, gloves, and ſword in his hands; as juſt riſen from table:* Mellefont *following him.*

Mel. *NED, Ned,* whither ſo faſt? What, turn'd flincher! Why, you wo'not leave us?

Care. Where are the women? I'm weary of drinking, and begin to think them the better company.

Mel. Then thy reaſon ſtaggers, and thou'rt almoſt tipſey.

Care. No, faith, but your fools grow noiſy——and if a man muſt endure the noiſe of words without ſenſe, I think the women have more muſical voices and become nonſenſe better.

Mel. Why, they are at the end of the gallery; retir'd to their tea, and ſcandal; according to their ancient cuſtom, after dinner.———But I made a pretence to follow you, becauſe I had ſomething to ſay to you in private, and I am not like to have many opportunities this evening.

Care. And here's this coxcomb moſt critically come to interrupt you.

Enter Briſk.

Briſk. Boys, boys, lads, where are you? What do you give ground, mortgage for a bottle, ha? *Careleſs*, this is your trick; you're always ſpoiling company by leaving it.

Care. And thou art always ſpoiling company by coming into't.

Briſk. Pooh, ha, ha, ha! I know you envy me. Spite, proud ſpite, by the gods! and burning envy—I'll be judg'd by *Mellefont* here, who gives and takes raillery better, you, or I. Pſhaw, man, when I ſay you ſpoil company by leaving it, I mean you leave nobody for the company to laugh at. I think there I was with you, ha? *Mellefont.*

Mel. O' my word, *Briſk*, that was a home thruſt, you have ſilenc'd him.

Briſk. O my dear *Mellefont*, let me periſh, if thou art not the ſoul of converſation, the very eſſence of wit and ſpirit of wine.——The deuce take me if there were three good things ſaid, or one underſtood, ſince thy amputation from the body of our ſociety.——He, I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough: I'gad I could not have ſaid it out of thy company,——*Careleſs*, ha?

Care. Hum, ay, what is't?

Briſk. O, *mon cœur!* What is't! Nay gad I'll puniſh for want of apprehenſion: the deuce take me if I tell you.

Mel. No, no, hang him, he has no taſte.——But, dear *Briſk*, excuſe me, I have a little buſineſs.

Care. Pr'ythee get thee gone; thou ſeeſt we are ſerious.

Mel. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up good humour and ſenſe in the company: Pr'ythee do, they'll fall aſleep elſe.

Briſk. I'gad ſo they will—Well I will, I will, gad you ſhall command me from the *Zenith* to the *Nadir*.——But the deuce take me if I ſay a good thing 'till you come.—But pr'ythee dear rogue, make haſte, pr'ythee make haſte, I ſhall burſt elſe.——And yonder your uncle, my Lord *Touchwood*, ſwears he'll diſinherit you, and Sir *Paul Plyant* threatens to diſclaim you for a ſon-in-law, and my Lord *Froth* won't dance at your wedding to morrow; nor the deuce take me, I won't write your epithalamium—and ſee what a condition you're like to be brought to.

Mel. Well, I'll ſpeak but three words, and follow you.

Briſk. Enough, enough, *Careleſs*, bring your apprehenſion along with you. [*Exit.*

Care. Pert coxcomb.

Mel. Faith 'tis a good-natur'd coxcomb, and has very enter-

entertaining follies—You must be more humane to him; at this juncture, it will do me service. I'll tell you, I would have mirth continued this day at any rate: tho' patience purchase folly, and attention be paid with noise: There are times when sense may be unseasonable, as well as truth. Pr'ythee do thou wear none to day; but allow *Brisk* to have wit, that thou may'st seem a fool.

Care. Why, how now, why this extravagant proposition?

Mel. O, I would have no room for serious design, for I am jealous of a plot. I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady *Touchwood*'s head from working: 'For hell is not more busy than her brain, nor contains 'more devils, than that imaginations.'

Care. I thought your fear of her had been over——Is not to-morrow appointed for your marriage with *Cynthia*, and her father, Sir *Paul Plyant*, come to settle the writings this day on purpose?

Mel. True; but you shall judge whether I have not reason to be alarm'd. None besides you, and *Maskwell*, are acquainted with the secret of my aunt *Touchwood*'s violent passion for me. Since my first refusal of her addresses, she has endeavour'd to do me all ill offices with my uncle; yet has managed 'em with that subtility, that to him they have born the face of kindness; while her malice, like a dark lanthorn, only shone upon me, where it was directed. 'Still it gave me less perplexity to pre-'vent the success of her displeasure, than to avoid the im-'portunities of her love; and of two evils, I thought my 'self favour'd in her aversion:' but whether urg'd by her despair, and the short prospect of time she saw, to accomplish her designs; whether the hopes of revenge, or of her love, terminated in the view of this my marriage with *Cynthia*, I know not; but this morning she surpriz'd me in my own chamber.——

Care. Was there ever such a fury! 'tis well nature 'has not put it into her sex's power to ravish.'——Well, bless us! proceed. What follow'd?

Mel. 'What at first amaz'd me; for I look'd to have seen 'her in all the transports of a slighted and revengeful wo-'man: but when I expected thunder from her voice, and

'lightning in her eyes; I saw her melted into tears, and 'hush'd into a sigh.' It was long before either of us spoke, passion had ty'd her tongue, and amazement mine.—— In short, the consequence was thus, she omitted nothing that the most violent love could urge, or tender words express; which when she saw had no effect, but still I pleaded honour and nearness of blood to my uncle; then came the storm I fear'd at first: For starting from my bed-side like a fury, she flew to my sword, and with much ado I prevented her doing me or herself a mischief: Having disarm'd her in a gust of passion she left me, and in a resolution, confirm'd by a thousand curses, not to close her eyes, 'till they had seen my ruin.

Care. Exquisite woman! But what 'the devil' does she think, thou hast no more sense, than to get an heir 'upon 'her body' to disinherit thyself: for as I take it, this settlement upon you, is, with a proviso, that your uncle have no children.

Mel. It is so. Well, the service you are to do me, will be a pleasure to yourself; I must get you to engage my Lady *Plyant* all this evening, that my pious aunt may not work her to her interest. And if you chance to secure her to yourself, you may incline her to mine. She's handsome, and knows it; is very silly, and thinks she has sense, and has an old fond husband.

Care. I confess a very fair foundation, for a lover to build upon.

Mel. For my Lord *Froth*, he and his wife will be sufficiently taken up, with admiring one another, and *Brisk*'s galantry, as they call it. I'll observe my uncle myself; and *Jack Maskwell* has promised me, to watch my aunt narrowly, and give me notice upon any suspicion. As for Sir *Paul*, my wife father-in-law that is to be, my dear *Cynthia* has such a share in his fatherly fondness, he would scarce make her a moment uneasy, to have her happy hereafter.

Care. So, you have mann'd your works: but I wish you may not have the weakest guard, where the enemy is strongest.

Mel. Maskwell, you mean: pr'ythee why should you suspect him?

Care.

Care. Faith I cannot help it, you know I never lik'd him; I am a little ſuperſtitious in phyſiognomy,

Mel. He has obligations of gratitude to bind him to me; his dependence upon my uncle is through my means.

Care. Upon your aunt you mean.

Mel. My aunt!

Care. I'm miſtaken if there be not a familiarity between them, you do not ſuſpect: notwithſtanding her paſſion for you.

Mel. Pooh, pooh, nothing in the world but his deſign to do me ſervice; and he endeavours to be well in her eſteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Care. Well, I ſhall be glad to be miſtaken; but your aunt's averſion in her revenge, cannot be any way ſo effectually ſhewn, as in promoting a means to diſinherit you. She is handſome and cunning, and naturally amorous. *Maſkwell* is fleſh and blood at beſt and opportunities between them are frequent. His affection to you have confeſſed, is grounded upon his intereſt, that you have tranſplanted; and ſhould it take root in my lady, I don't ſee what you can expect from the fruit.

Mel. I confeſs the conſequence is viſible, were your ſuſpicions juſt.——But ſee, the company is broke up, let's meet 'em.

Enter Lord Touchwood, *Lord* Froth, *Sir* Paul Plyant, *and* Briſk.

Ld. *Touch.* Out upon't, nephew—Leave your father-in-law, and me to maintain our ground againſt young people.

Mel. I beg your lordſhip's pardon—We were juſt returning.————

Sir *Paul.* Were you, ſon? gadsbud much better as it is——Good, ſtrange! I ſwear I'm almoſt tipſy—t'other bottle would have been too powerful for me,—as ſure as can be it would.—We wanted your company, but Mr. *Briſk*—Where is he? I ſwear and vow, he's a moſt facetious perſon—and the beſt company.—And my Lord *Froth*, your lordſhip is ſo merry a man, he, he, he!

Ld. *Froth.* O foy, Sir *Paul*, what do you mean? Merry! O barbarous! I'd as lief you call'd me fool.

Sir *Paul.* Nay, I proteſt and vow now, 'tis true; when

Mr. *Briſk* jokes, your lordſhip's laugh does ſo become you, he, he he!

Ld. *Froth.* Ridiculous! Sir *Paul*, you're ſtrangely miſtaken, I find Champagne is powerful. I aſſure you, Sir *Paul*, I laugh at nobody's jeſt but my own, or a Lady's; I aſſure you, Sir *Paul*.

Briſk. How? how, my lord? what affront my wit! Let me periſh, do I never ſay any thing worthy to be laugh'd at?

Ld. *Froth.* O foy, don't miſapprehend me, I don't ſay ſo, for I often ſmile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality, than to laugh; 'tis ſuch a vulgar expreſſion of the paſſion! every body can laugh. Then eſpecially to laugh at the jeſt of an inferior perſon, or when any body elſe of the ſame quality does not laugh with one; ridiculous! to be pleaſed with what pleaſes the croud! Now when I laugh, I always laugh alone.

Briſk. I ſuppoſe that's becauſe you laugh at your own jeſts, I'gad, ha, ha, ha!

Ld. *Froth.* He, he! I ſwear tho', your raillery provokes me to a ſmile.

Briſk. Ay, my lord, it's a ſign I hit you in the teeth, if you ſhew 'em.

Ld. *Froth.* He, he, he! I ſwear that's ſo very pretty, I can't forbear.

Care. I find a quibble bears more ſway in your lordſhip's face, than a jeſt.

Ld. *Touch.* Sir *Paul*, if you pleaſe we'll retire to the ladies, and drink a diſh of tea, to ſettle our heads.

Sir *Paul.* With all my heart.——Mr. *Briſk*, you'll come to us,——or call me when you joke, I'll be ready to laugh incontinently. [*Exit.*

Mel. But does you lordſhip never ſee comedies?

Ld. *Froth.* O yes, ſometimes,—But I never laugh.

Mel. No?

Ld. *Froth.* Oh, no,—Never laugh indeed, ſir.

Care. No! why what d'ye go there for?

Ld. *Froth.* To diſtinguiſh myſelf from the commonalty, and mortify the poets; the fellows grow ſo conceited, when any of their fooliſh wit prevails upon the ſide-boxes. I ſwear

—I swear,——he, he, he! I have often constrain'd my inclinations to laugh,——he, he! he's to avoid giving them encouragement.

Mel. You are cruel to yourself, my lord, as well as malicious to them.

Ld. *Froth.* I confess I did myself some violence at first, but now I think I have conquer'd it.

Brisk. Let me perish, my lord, but there is something very particular in the humour; 'tis true, it makes against wit, and I'm sorry for some friends of mine that write, but—I'gad, I love to be malicious.—Nay, deuce take me there's wit in't too—And wit must be foil'd by wit; cut a diamond with a diamond; no other way, I'gad.

Ld. *Froth.* Oh, I thought you would not be long, before you found out the wit.

Care. Wit! In what? Where the devil's the wit, in not laughing when a man has a mind to't?

Brisk. O Lord, why can't you find it out?—Why there 'tis, in the not laughing—Don't you apprehend me?—My lord, *Careless* is a very honest fellow, but hark'ye, you understand me, somewhat heavy, a little shallow, or so.——Why I'll tell you now, suppose now you come up to me——Nay, pr'ythee *Careless* be instructed. Suppose, as I was saying, you come up to me holding your sides, and laughing, as if you would—Well—I look grave, and ask the cause of this immoderate mirth——You laugh on still, and are not able to tell me—Still I look grave, not so much as smile.——

Care. Smile, no, what the devil should you smile at, when you suppose I can't tell you!

Brisk. Pshaw, pshaw, pr'ythee don't interrupt me.—But I tell you, you shall tell me——at last——But it shall be a great while first.

Care. Well, but pry'thee don't let it be a great while, because I long to have it over.

Brisk. Well then, you tell me some good jest, or very witty thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die——and I hear it, and look thus.——Would not you be disappointed?

Care. No; for if it were a witty thing, I should not expect you to understand it.

Ld. *Froth.* O fy, Mr. *Careleſs*, all the world allow Mr. *Briſk* to have wit; my wife ſays, he has a great deal. I hope you think her a judge.

Briſk. Pooh, my lord, his voice goes for nothing.—I can't tell how to make him apprehend.—Take it t'other way. Suppoſe I ſay a witty thing to you?

Care. Then I ſhall be diſappointed indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, *Briſk*, he is obſtinately bent not to be inſtructed.

Briſk. I'm ſorry for him, the deuce take me.

Mel. Shall we go to the ladies, my lord?

Ld. *Froth.* With all my heart, methinks we are a ſolitude without 'em.

Mel. Or, what ſay you to another bottle of Champagne?

Ld. *Froth.* O, for the univerſe, not a drop more I beſeech you. O intemperate! I have a flushing in my face already. [*Takes out a pocket-glaſs, and looks in it.*

Briſk. Let me ſee, let me ſee, my lord, I broke my glaſs that was in the lid of my ſnuff-box. Hum! deuce take me, I have encourag'd a pimple here too.

[*Takes the glaſs and looks.*

Ld. *Froth.* Then you muſt mortify him with a patch; my wife ſhall ſupply you. Come, gentlemen, *allons*, here is company coming. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady Touchwood, *and* Maſkwell.

L. *T.* I'll hear no more——You're falſe and ungrateful; come, I know you're falſe.

Maſk. I have been frail, I confeſs, madam, for your ladyſhip's ſervice.

L. *T.* That I ſhould truſt a man, whom I had known betray his friend!

Mask. What friend have I betray'd? Or to whom?

L. *T.* Your fond friend *Mellefont*, and to me; can you deny it?

Mask. I do not.

L. *T.* Have you not wrong'd my lord, who has been a father to you in your wants, and given you being? Have you not wrong'd him in the higheſt manner, 'in 'his bed?'

Mask. With your ladyſhip's help, and for your ſervice, as I told you before. I can't deny that neither.—Any thing more, madam?

L. *T.*

L. *T.* More! audacious villain. O, what's more, is moſt my ſhame,——Have you notdiſhonour'd me?

Mask. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my life: ſo that accuſation's anſwer'd; on to the next.

L. *T.* Death, do you dally with my paſſion? Inſolent devil! But have a care,——Provoke me not; for, 'by 'the eternal fire,' you ſhall not 'ſcape my vengeance.—calm villain! How unconcern'd he ſtands, confeſſing treachery, and ingratitnde! Is there a vice more black!—O I have excuſes, thouſands for my faults; fire in my temper, paſſions in my ſoul, apt to ev'ry provocation; oppreſſed at once with love, and with deſpair. But a ſedate, a thinking villain, whoſe black blood runs temperately bad, what excuſe can clear?

Mask. Will you be in temper, madam? I would not talknot tobe heard. I have been [*She walks about diſorder'd.*] a very great rogue for your ſake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a rogue ſtill to do you ſervice; and you are flinging conſcience and honour in my face, to rebate my inclinations. How am I to behave myſelf? You know I am your creature; my life and fortune in your power; to diſoblige you, brings me certain ruin. Allow it, I would betray you, I would not be a traitor to myſelf: I don't pretend to honeſty, becauſe you know I am a raſcal: but I would convince you from the neceſſity of my being firm to you.

L. *T.* Neceſſity, impudence! can no gratitude incline you, no obligations touch you? 'Have not my fortune, 'and my perſon been ſubjected to your pleaſure?' Were you not in the nature of a ſervant, and have not I in effect made you lord of all, of me, and of my lord? Where is that humble love, the languiſhing, that adoration, which was once paid me, and everlaſtingly engaged?

Mask. Fixt, rooted in my heart, whence nothing can remove 'em, yet you———

L. *T.* Yet, what yet?

Mask. Nay miſconceive me not, madam, when I ſay I have had a gen'rous, and a faithful paſſion, which you had never favour'd, but through revenge and policy.

L. *T.* Ha!

Mask.

Mask. Look you, madam, we are alone,——Pray contain yourself, and hear me. You know you lov'd your nephew, when I first sigh'd for you; I quickly found it; an argument that I lov'd; for with that art you veil'd your passion, 'twas imperceptible to all but jealous eyes. This discovery made me bold, I confess it; for by it, I thought you in my power. Your nephew's scorn of you, added to my hopes; I watch'd the occasion, and took you, just repulsed by him, warm at once, with love and indignation; your disposition, my arguments, and happy opportunity, accomplish'd my design, 'I prest 'the yielding minute, and was blest.' How I have lov'd you since, words have not shewn, then how should words express?

L. *T.* Well, mollifying devil!——And have I not met your love with forward fire?

Mask. Your zeal I grant was ardent, but misplac'd; there was revenge in view; 'that woman's idol had de-'fil'd the temple of the god, and love was made a mock-'worship. ——A son and heir would have edg'd young '*Mellefont* upon the brink of ruin, and left him none 'but you to catch at for prevention.'

L. *T.* Again, provoke me! do you wind me like a larum, only to rouse my own still'd soul for your diversion! confusion!

Mask. Nay, madam, I'm gone, if you relapse,—What needs this? I say nothing but what you yourself, in open hours of love, have told me. Why should you deny it? Nay, how can you? Is not all this present heat owing to the same fire? Do you not love him still? How have I this day offended you, but in not breaking off his match with *Cynthia*? Which ere to-morrow shall be done,—— had you but patience.

L. *T.* How, what said you, *Maskwell*,——Another caprice to unwind my temper?

Mask. By Heav'n, no; I am your slave, the slave of all your pleasures; and will not rest 'till I have given you peace, would you suffer me.

L. *T.* O *Maskwell*, in vain I do disguise me from thee, thou know'st me, know'st the very inmost windings and recesses of my soul.—O *Mellefont!* I burn; married

ried to morrow! deſpair ſtrikes me. Yet my ſoul knows I hate him too: let him but once be mine, and next immediate ruin ſeize him.

Mask. Compoſe yourſelf, you ſhall poſſeſs and ruin him too,——Will that pleaſe you?

L. *T.* How, how? Thou dear, thou precious villain, how?

Mask. You have already been tampering with my Lady *Plyant.*

L. *T.* I have: She is ready for any impreſſion I think fit.

Mask. She muſt be thoroughly perſuaded, that *Mellefont* loves her.

L. *T.* She is ſo credulous that way naturally, and likes him ſo well, that ſhe will believe it faſter than I can perſuade her. But I don't ſee what you can propoſe from ſuch a trifling deſign; for her firſt converſing with *Mellefont*, will convince her of the contrary.

Mask. I know it.——I don't depend upon it.—But it will prepare ſomething elſe, and gain us leiſure to lay a ſtronger plot: If I gain a little time, I ſhall not want contrivance.

One minute gives invention to deſtroy,
What to rebuild, will a whole age employ. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter Lady Froth *and* Cynthia.

Cynt. INDEED, madam! Is it poſſible your ladyſhip could have been ſo much in love?

L. *Froth.* I could not ſleep; I did not ſleep one wink for three weeks together.

Cynt. Prodigious! I wonder, want of ſleep, and ſo much love, and ſo much wit as your ladyſhip has, did not turn your brain.

L. *Froth.* O my dear *Cynthia*, you muſt not rally your friend.——But really, as you ſay, I wonder too,——

But then I had a way.——For between you and I, I had whimsies and vapours, but I gave them vent.

Cynt. How pray, madam.

L. *Froth.* Oh, I writ, writ abundantly—Do you never write.

Cynt. Write, what?

L. *Froth.* Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyricks, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

Cynt. O lord, not I, madam; I'm content to be a courteous reader.

L. *Froth.* O inconsistent! In love, and not write! If my lord and I had been both of your temper, we had never come together,——O bless me; what a sad thing would that have been, if my lord and I should never have met!

Cynt. Then neither my lord nor you would ever have met with your match, on my conscience.

L. *Froth.* O' my conscience no more we should; thou say'st right——For sure my Lord *Froth* is as fine a gentleman, and as much a man of quality! ah! nothing at all of the common air,——I think I may say he wants nothing, but a blue ribbon and a star, to make him shine, the very phosphorus of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? If you don't, I'll explain 'em to you.

Cynt. Yes, yes, madam, I'm not so ignorant.——At least I won't own it, to be troubled with your instructions. [*Aside.*

L. *Froth.* Nay, I beg your pardon; but being deriv'd from the *Greek*, I thought you might have escap'd the etymology.——But I'm the more amaz'd, to find you a woman of letters, and not write! bless me! how can *Mellefont* believe you love him?

Cynt. Why faith, madam, he that won't take my word, shall never have it under my hand.

L. *Froth.* I vow *Mellefont*'s a pretty gentleman, but methinks he wants a manner.

Cynt. A manner! what's that, madam?

L. *Froth.* Some distinguishing quality, as for example, the *bell air* or *brillant* of Mr. *Brisk*; the solemnity, yet complaisance of my lord, or something of his own that should look a little *Je-ne-scai quoi*; he is too much a mediocrity, in my mind.

Cynt.

Cynt. He does not indeed affect either pertneſs or formality; for which I like him: Here he comes.

L. *Froth.* And my lord with him: Pray obſerve the difference. *Enter Lord* Froth, Mellefont *and* Briſk.

Cynt. Impertinent creature! I could almoſt be angry with her now. [*Aſide.*

L. *Froth.* My lord, I have been telling *Cynthia,* how much I have been in love with you; I ſwear I have; I'm not aſham'd to own it now; Ah! it makes my heart leap, I vow, I ſigh when I think on't: my dear lord! Ha, ha, ha! do you remember, my lord?

[*Squeezes him by the hand, looks kindly on him, ſighs, and then laughs out.*]

Ld. *Froth.* Pleaſant creature! perfectly well, ah! that look, ay, there it is; who could reſiſt! 'twas ſo my heart was made a captive firſt, and ever ſince t'has been in love with happy ſlavery.

L. *Froth.* O that tongue, that dear deceitful tongue! that charming ſoftneſs in your mien and your expreſſion, and then your bow! good my lord, bow as you did when I gave you my picture, here ſuppoſe this my picture—[*Gives him a pocket glaſs.*] Pray mind my lord; ah! he bows charmingly; nay, my lord, you ſhan't kiſs it ſo much; I ſhall grow jealous, I vow now.

[*He bows profoundly low, then kiſſes the glaſs.*

Ld. *Froth.* I ſaw myſelf there, and kiſs'd it for your ſake.

L. *Froth.* Ah! gallantry to the laſt degree—Mr. *Briſk,* you're a judge; was ever any thing ſo well bred as my lord?

Briſk. Never any thing; but your ladyſhip, let me periſh.

L. *Froth.* O prettily turn'd again; let me die but you have a great deal of wit: Mr. *Mellefont,* don't you think Mr. *Briſk* has a world of wit?

Mel. O, yes, madam.

Briſk. O dear, madam———

L. *Froth.* An infinite deal!

Briſk. O Heav'ns, madam———

L. *Froth.* More wit than any body.

Briſk. I'm everlaſtingly your humble ſervant, deuce take me, madam.

Ld. *Froth.* Don't you think us a happy couple?

Cynt. I vow, my lord, I think you the happieſt couple in the world, for you're not only happy in one another,

ther, and when you are together, but happy in yourſelves, and by yourſelves.

Ld. *Froth.* I hope *Mellefont* will make a good huſband too.

Cynt. 'Tis my intereſt to believe he will, my lord.

Ld. *Froth.* D'ye think he'll love you as well as I do my wife? I'm afraid not.

Cynt. I believe he'll love me better.

Ld. *Froth.* Heav'ns! that can never be; but why do you think ſo?

Cynt. Becauſe he has not ſo much reaſon to be fond of himſelf.

Ld. *Froth.* O your humble ſervant for that, dear madam; well, *Mellefont*, you'll be a happy creature.

Mel. Ay, my lord, I ſhall have the ſame reaſon for my happineſs that your lordſhip has, I ſhall think myſelf happy.

Ld. *Froth.* Ah, that's all.

Brisk. [*To Lady* Froth] Your ladyſhip is in the right; but I'gad I'm wholly turn'd into ſatire. I confeſs I write but ſeldom, but when I do—keen *Iambicks* I'gad. But my lord was telling me, your ladyſhip has made an eſſay toward an heroic poem.

L. *Froth.* Did my lord tell you? Yes I vow, and the ſubject is my lord's love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare ſwear you won't gueſs——*The Sillabub*, ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Becauſe my lord's title's *Froth*, I'gad; ha, ha, ha! deuce take me very *àpropos* and ſurprizing, ha, ha, ha!

L. *Froth.* He, ay, is not it?——And then I call my lord *Spumoſo*; and myſelf, what d'ye think I call myſelf?

Brisk. Lactilla may be,——'gad I cannot tell,

L. *Froth. Biddy*, that's all; juſt my own name.

Brisk. Biddy! I'gad very pretty——Deuce take me if your ladyſhip has not the art of ſurprizing the moſt naturally in the world,——I hope you'll make me happy in communicating the poem.

L. *Froth.* O, you muſt be confident, I muſt aſk your advice.

Brisk. I'm your humble ſervant, let me periſh,——I preſume your ladyſhip has read *Boſſu?*

L. *Froth.* O yes, and *Rapin*, and *Dacier* upon *Ariſtotle* and

and *Horace.*——My lord, you must not be jealous, I'm communicating all to Mr. *Brisk.*

Ld. *Froth,* No, no, I'll allow Mr. *Brisk*; have you nothing about you to shew him, my dear?

L. *Froth.* Yes, I believe I have.——Mr. *Brisk,* come will you go into the next room? 'and there I'll shew you 'what I have.' [*Exeunt L.* Froth *and* Brisk.

Ld. *Froth.* I'll walk a turn in the garden, and come to you. [*Exit.*

Mel. You're thoughtful, *Cynthia?*

Cynt. I'm thinking, tho' marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves 'em still two fools; and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are oppos'd.

Cynt. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. 'Tis an odd game we're going to play at: What think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang't, that's not endeavouring to win, because it's possible we may lose; since we have shuffled and cut, let's e'en turn up trump now.

Cynt. Then I find it's like cards, if either of us have a good hand it is an accident of fortune.

Mel. No, marriage is rather like a game at bowls, fortune indeed makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two farthest are together, but the game depends intirely upon judgment.

Cynt. Still it is a game, and consequently one of us must be a loser.

Mel. Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.——'What's 'here, the musick!——Oh, my lord has promised the 'company a new song, we'll get 'em to give it us by the 'way [*Musicians crossing the stage.*] Pray let us have the 'favour of you, to practice the song, before the company 'hear it.

'SONG.

'SONG.

I.

'CYnthia *frowns when-e'er I woo to her,*
'*Yet she's vext if I give over;*
'*Much she fears I should undo her,*
'*But much more to lose her lover:*
'*Thus, in doubting, she refuses;*
'*And not winning, thus she loses.*

II.

'*Pr'ythee,* Cynthia, *look behind you,*
'*Age and wrinkles will o'ertake you;*
'*Then too late desire will find you,*
'*When the power must forsake you:*
'*Think, O think o'th' sad condition,*
'*To be past, yet wish fruition.*

'*Mel.* You shall have my thanks below.

'[*To the musick, they go out.*'

Enter Sir Paul *and Lady* Plyant.

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud! I am provok'd into a fermentation, as my Lady *Froth* says; was ever the like read of in story?

L. *P.* Sir *Paul,* have patience; let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir *Paul.* Pray your ladyship give me leave to be angry ——I'll rattle him up I warrant you. I'll teach him with a *certiorari* to make love to my wife.

L. *P.* You teach him! I'll teach him myself and make him blush for his dishonourable notions of Lady *Plyant*'s rectitude; so pray, Sir *Paul,* leave him to me and hold you contented.

'*Cynt.* Bless me, what makes my father in such a 'passion?——I never saw him thus before.'

Sir *Paul.* Hold yourself contented, my Lady *Plyant*—I find passion coming upon me even to desperation, as the philosopher says; and I cannot submit as formerly, therefore give way.

L. *P.* How now! will you be pleased to retire, and—

Sir *Paul.* No marry will I not be pleased; I am pleased to be angry, that's my pleasure at this time.

'*Mel.* What can this mean!'

L. *P.*

L. *P.* Gads my life, the man's distracted: why how now, who are you? What am I? Slidikins can't I govern you? What did I marry you for? Am I not to be absolute and uncontrollable? Is it fit a woman of my spirit and conduct, should be contradicted in a matter of this concern?

Sir *Paul.* It concerns me, and only me;——Besides, I'm not to be govern'd at all times. When I am in tranquility, my Lady *Plyant* shall command Sir *Paul*; but when I am provok'd to fury, I cannot incorporate with patience and reason,——as soon may tigers match with tigers, lambs with lambs, and every creature couple with its foe, as the poet says.———

L. *P* He's hot-headed still! 'Tis in vain to talk to you; but remember I have a curtain-lecture for you, you disobedient, headstrong brute.

Sir *Paul.* No, 'tis because I won't be headstrong, because I won't be a brute, and have my head fortify'd, that I am thus exasperated,—But I will protect my honour, and yonder is the violator of my fame.

L. *P.* 'Tis my honour that is concern'd, and the violation was intended to me. Your honour! You have none but what is in my keeping, and I can dispose of it when I please——therefore don't provoke me.

Sir *Paul.* Hum, gads-bud she says true——Well, my lady, march on, I will fight under you then: I am convinced, as far as passion will permit.

[*L.* Plyant *and Sir* Paul *come up to* Mellefont.

L. *P.* Inhuman and treacherous———

Sir *Paul.* Thou serpent and first tempter of womankind.———

Cynt. Bless me! sir; madam; what mean you?

Sir *Paul. Thy, Thy,* come away *Thy*, touch him not, come hither, girl, go not near him, there's nothing but deceit about him; snakes are in his peruke, and the crocodile of *Nilus* is in his wicked appetite; he wou'd devour thy fortune and starve thee alive.

L. *P.* Dishonourable, impudent creature!

Mel. For Heav'n's sake, madam, to whom do you direct this language!

L. *P.*

L. *P.* Have I behav'd myſelf with all the decorum and nicety, befitting the perſon of Sir *Paul*'s wife? Have I preſerv'd my honour as it were in a ſnow-houſe for theſe three years paſt? Have I been white and unſully'd even by Sir *Paul* himſelf?

Sir *Paul.* Nay, ſhe has been an invincible wife, even to me, that's the truth on't.

L. *P.* Have I, I ſay, preſerv'd myſelf, like a fair ſheet of paper, for you to make a blot upon?———

Sir *Paul.* And ſhe ſhall make a ſimile with any woman in *England.*

Mel. I am ſo amaz'd, I know not what to ſay.

Sir *Paul.* Do you think my daughter, this pretty creature; gads-bud ſhe's a wife for a cherubin! Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a ſtalking horſe, to ſtand before you, while you take aim at my wife; gads-bud I was never angry before in my life, and I'll never be appeas'd again.

Mel. Confuſion! this is my aunt; ſuch malice can be engendred no where elſe. [*Aſide.*

L. *P.* Sir *Paul,* take *Cynthia* from his ſight; leave me to ſtrike him with the remorſe of his intended crime.

Cynt. Pray, ſir, ſtay, hear him, I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir *Paul.* Innocent! Why! hark'ee, come hither, *Thy,* hark'ee, I had it from his aunt, my ſiſter *Touchwood,*—gads-bud he does not care a farthing for any thing of thee, but thy portion, why he's in love with my wife; he would have tantaliz'd thee, and made a cuckold of thy poor father,———and that would certainly have broke my heart—'I'm ſure if ever I ſhould have horns, they 'would kill me; they would never come kindly, I ſhould 'die of 'em, like a child, that was cutting his teeth——— 'I ſhould indeed, *Thy*—therefore come away;' but Providence has prevented all, therefore come away, when I bid you.

Cynt. I muſt obey. [*Exeunt Sir* Paul *and* Cynthia.

L. *P.* O, ſuch a thing! the impiety of it ſtartles me—to wrong ſo good, ſo fair a creature, and one that loves you tenderly———'tis a barbarity of barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it——

Mel.

Mel. But the greateſt villain imagination can form! I grant it; and next to the villainy of ſuch a fact, is the villainy of aſperſing me with the guilt. How? which way was I to wrong her? For yet I underſtand you not.

L. *P.* Why, gads my life, couſin *Mellefont*, you cannot be ſo peremptory as to deny it; when I tax you with it to your face; for now Sir *Paul's* gone, you are *coram nobis*.

Mel. By Heav'n, I love her more than life, or——

L. *P.* Fiddle, faddle, don't tell me of this and that, and ev'ry thing in the world, but give me mathemacular demonſtration, anſwer me directly—But I have not patience——Oh! the impiety of it, as I was ſaying, and the unparallel'd wickedneſs! O merciful father! How could you think to reverſe nature ſo, to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother?

Mel. The daughter to procure the mother!

L. *P.* Ay, for tho' I am not *Cynthia's* own mother, I am her father's wife; and that's near enough to make it inceſt.

Mel. Inceſt! O my precious aunt, and the devil in conjunction. [*Aſide.*

L. *P.* O reflect upon the horror of that, and then the guilt of deceiving every body; marrying the daughter, only to diſhonour the bed of the father; and then ſeducing me, 'debauching my purity, and perverting me' from the road of virtue, in which I have trod thus long, and never made one trip, not one *faux pas*; 'O conſi-'der it, what would you have to anſwer for, if you 'ſhould provoke me to frailty? Alas! humanity is fee-'ble, Heav'n knows! very feeble, and unable to ſup-'port itſelf.'

Mel. Where am I? Is it day? and am I awake? madam——

L. *P.* And nobody knows how circumſtances may happen together.——To my thinking, now I could reſiſt the ſtrongeſt temptation,—But yet I know, 'tis impoſſible for me to know whether I could or not, there's no certainty in the things of this life.

Mel. Madam, pray give me leave to aſk you one queſtion.——

L. *P.* O Lord, ask me the question, I'll swear, I'll swear it; I swear I'll deny it———therefore don't ask me, nay you shan't ask me, I swear I'll deny it. O Gemini, you have brought all the blood into my face; I warrant I am as red as a turkey-cock; O fy, cousin *Mellefont!*

Mel. Nay, madam, hear me; I mean———

L. *P.* Hear you, no, no; I'll deny you first, and hear you afterwards. For one does not know how ones mind may change upon hearing.—Hearing is one of the senses, and all the senses are fallible; I won't trust my honour, I assure you; my honour is infallible and uncomatible.

Mel. For Heav'n's sake, madam,———

L. *P.* O name it no more——Bless me, how can you talk of Heav'n! and have so much wickedness in your heart? May be you don't think it a sin.—They say some of you gentlemen don't think it a sin.—'May be it is no 'sin to them that don't think it so;' indeed, if I did not think it a sin—But still my honour, if it were no sin, —But then, to marry my daughter, for the conveniency of frequent opportunities,—I'll never consent to that, as sure as can be, I'll break the match.

Mel. Death and amazement.——Madam, upon my knees———

L. *P.* Nay, nay, rise up, come you shall see my good-nature. I know love is powerful, and no body can help his passion: 'Tis not your fault; nor I swear it is not mine,—How can I help it, if I have charms? And how can you help it, if you are made a captive? 'I swear it 'is pity it should be a fault,—But my honour,——well, 'but your honour too,—but the sin!—well but the ne-'cessity.'—O lord, here's somebody coming, I dare not stay. Well, you must consider of your crime; and strive as much as can be against it,—strive be sure—But don't be melancholick, don't despair.—But never think that I'll grant you any thing; O lord, no.—But be sure you lay aside all thoughts of the marriage, for tho' I know you don't love *Cynthia*, only as a blind for your passion to me; yet it will make me jealous.—O lord, what did I say? Jealous! no, no, I can't be jealous, for I must not love you,—therefore don't hope.—But don't despair neither.—O, they're coming, I must fly. [*Exit. Mel.*

Mel. [*After a pauſe.*] So then,——ſpite of my care and foreſight, I am caught, caught in my ſecurity.—— Yet this was but a ſhallow artifice, unworthy of my Machiavelian aunt: there muſt be more behind, 'this is 'but the firſt flaſh, the priming of her engine; deſtruc-'tion follows hard, if not moſt preſently prevented.'

Enter Maſkwell.

Maſkwell, welcome, thy preſence is a view of land, appearing to my ſhipwreck'd hopes: the witch has rais'd the ſtorm, and her miniſters have done their work; you ſee the veſſels are parted.

Maſk. I know it; I met Sir *Paul* towing away *Cynthia*: come, trouble not your head, I'll join you together, ere to-morrow morning, or drown between you in the attempt.

Mel. There's comfort in a hand ſtretch'd out, to one that's ſinking; tho' ne'er ſo far off.

Maſk. No ſinking, nor no danger,——Come, cheer up; why you don't know, that while I plead for you, your aunt has given me a retaining fee;——Nay, I am your greateſt enemy, and ſhe does but journey-work under me.

Mel. Ha! How's this?

Mask. What d'ye think of my being employ'd in the execution of all her plots? Ha, ha, ha! nay it's true; I have undertaken to break the match, I have undertaken to make your uncle diſinherit you, to get you turn'd out of doors; and to—Ha, ha, ha! I can't tell you for laughing,——O ſhe has open'd her heart to me,—I am to turn you a grazing, and to——Ha, ha, ha! marry *Cynthia* myſelf; there's a plot for you.

Mel. Ha! O I ſee, I ſee my riſing ſun! Light breaks thro' clouds upon me, and I ſhall live in day——O my *Maskwell!* How ſhall I thank or praiſe thee: thou haſt outwitted woman.—But tell me, how could'ſt thou thus get into her confidence?—Ha! how? But was it her contrivance to perſuade my Lady *Plyant* to this extravagant belief?

Mask. It was, and to tell you the truth I encourag'd it for your diverſion: tho' it made you a little uneaſy

for the preſent, yet the reflexion of it muſt needs be entertaining,——I warrant ſhe was very violent at firſt.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! ay, a very fury; but I was moſt afraid of her violence at laſt,—'If you had not come as 'you did, I don't know what ſhe might have attempted.'

Maſk. Ha, ha, ha! I know her temper.—Well, you muſt know then, that all my contrivances were but bubbles; 'till at laſt I pretended to have been long ſecretly in love with *Cynthia*; that did my buſineſs; that convinc'd your aunt, I might be truſted; ſince it was as much my intereſt as hers to break the match: then, ſhe thought my jealouſy might qualify me to aſſiſt her in her revenge. And, in ſhort, in that belief, told me the ſecrets of her heart. At length we made this agreement, if I accompliſh her deſigns (as I told you before) ſhe has engag'd to put *Cynthia* with all her fortune into my power.

Mel. She is moſt gracious in her favour,—Well, and dear *Jack*, how haſt thou contrived?

Maſk. I would not have you ſtay to hear it now; for I don't know, but ſhe may come this way; I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole matter; be here in this gallery an hour hence, by that time I imagine our conſultation may be over.

Mel. I will, 'till then ſucceſs attend thee. [*Exit.*

Maſk. 'Till then ſucceſs will attend me; for when I meet you, I meet the only obſtacle to my fortune. *Cynthia* let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatſoever I commit of treachery or deceit, ſhall be imputed to me as a merit—Treachery, what treachery? Love cancels all the bonds of friendſhip, and ſets men right upon their firſt foundations.

Duty to kings, piety to parents, gratitude to benefactors, and fidelity to friends, are different and particular ties: but the name of rival cuts 'em all aſunder, and is a general acquittance——Rival is equal, and love like death an univerſal leveller of mankind. Ha! But is there not ſuch a thing as honeſty? Yes, and whoſoever has it about him, bears an enemy in his breaſt: for your honeſt man, as I take it, is that nice, ſcrupulous, conſcientious perſon, who will cheat no body but himſelf; ſuch another

another coxcomb, as your wise man, who is too hard for all the world, and will be made a fool of by nobody, but himself: ha, ha, ha! Well for wisdom and honesty, give me cunning and hypocrisy; oh, 'tis such a pleasure, to angle for fair-fac'd fools! Then that hungry gudgeon credulity will bite at any thing—Why, let me see, I have the same face, the same words and accents, when I speak what I do think; and when I speak what I do not think—the very same—and dear dissimulation is the only art, not to be known from nature.

Why will mankind be fools, and be deceiv'd?
And why are friends and lovers oaths believ'd?
When, each, who searches strictly his own mind,
May so much fraud and power of baseness find. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

Enter Lord Touchwood *and Lady* Touchwood.

L. *T.* MY lord, can you blame my brother *Plyant*, if he refuses his daughter upon this provocation? The contract's void by this unheard of impiety.

Ld. *T.* I don't believe it true; he has better principles—Pho, 'tis nonsense. Come, come, I know my Lady *Plyant* 'has a large eye, and wou'd centre every 'thing in her own circle;' 'tis not the first time she has mistaken respect for love, and made Sir *Paul* jealous of the civility of an undesigning person, the better to bespeak his security in her unfeigned pleasures.

L. *T.* You censure hardly, my lord; my sister's honour is very well known.

Ld. *T.* Yes, I believe I know some that have been familiarly acquainted with it. This is a little trick wrought by some pityful contriver, envious of my nephew's merit.

L. *T.* Nay, my lord, it may be so, and I hope it will be found so: but that will require some time; for in such a case as this, demonstration is necessary.

Ld. *T.* There ſhould have been demonſtration of the contrary too, before it had been believ'd———

L. *T.* So I ſuppoſe there was.

Ld. *T.* How? where? when?

L. *T.* That I can't tell; nay I don't ſay there was—I am willing to believe as favourably of my nephew as I can.

Ld. *T.* I don't know that. [*Half aſide.*

L. *T.* How? Don't you believe that, ſay you, my lord?

Ld. *T.* No, I don't ſay ſo—I confeſs I am troubled to find you ſo cold in his defence.

L. *T.* His defence! bleſs me, would you have me defend an ill thing.

Ld. *T.* You believe it then?

L. *T.* I don't know; I am very unwilling to ſpeak my thoughts in any thing that may be to my couſin's diſadvantage; beſides, I find, my lord, you are prepared to receive an ill impreſſion from any opinion of mine which is not conſenting with your own: but ſince I am like to be ſuſpected in the end, and 'tis a pain any longer to diſſemble, I own it to you; in ſhort I do believe it, nay, and can believe any thing worſe, if it were laid to his charge—Don't aſk me my reaſons, my lord, for they are not fit to be told you.

Ld. *T.* I'm amaz'd, here muſt be ſomething more than ordinary in this, [*Aſide.*] Not fit to be told me, madam? You can have no intereſts, wherein I am not concern'd, and conſequently the ſame reaſons ought to be convincing to me, which create your ſatisfaction or diſquiet.

L. *T.* But thoſe which cauſe my diſquiet, I am willing to have remote from your hearing. Good my lord, don't preſs me.

Ld. *T.* Don't oblige me to preſs you.

L. *T.* Whatever it was, 'tis paſt: and that is better to be unknown which cannot be prevented; therefore let me beg you to reſt ſatisfy'd———

Ld. *T.* When you have told me, I will———

L. *T.* You won't.

Ld. *T.* By my life, my dear, I will.

L. *T.*

L. *T.* What if you can't?

Ld. *T.* How? Then I muſt know, nay I will: no more trifling——I charge you tell me—By all our mutual peace to come; upon your duty————

L. *T.* Nay, my lord, you need ſay no more, to make me lay my heart before you, but don't be thus tranſported; compoſe yourſelf: it is not of concern, to make you loſe one minute's temper. 'Tis not indeed, my dear. Nay, by this kiſs you ſhan't be angry. O lord, I wiſh I had not told you any thing.——Indeed, my lord, you have frighted me. Nay, look pleas'd, I'll tell you.

Ld. *T.* Well, well.

L. *T.* Nay, but will you be calm—indeed it's nothing but————

Ld. *T.* But what?

L. *T.* But will you promiſe me not to be angry—Nay you muſt—Not to be angry with *Mellefont*—I dare ſwear he's ſorry—and were it to do again, would not————

Ld. *T.* Sorry, for what? 'Death, you rack me with delay.

L. *T.* Nay, no great matter, only—Well I have your promiſe,—Pho, why nothing, only your nephew had a mind to amuſe himſelf, ſometimes with a little galantry towards me. Nay, I can't think he meant any thing ſeriouſly, but me thought it look'd oddly.

Ld. *T.* Confuſion and hell, what do I hear?

L. *T.* Or, may be, he thought he was not enough akin to me, upon your account, and had a mind to create a nearer relation on his own; a lover you know, my lord—Ha, ha, ha! Well but that's all—Now you have it; well remember your promiſe, my lord, and don't take any notice of it to him.

Ld. *T.* No, no, no—'Damnation!'

L. *T.* Nay, I ſwear you muſt not—A little harmleſs mirth—Only miſplac'd, that's all—But if it were more, 'tis over now, and all's well. For my part, I have forgot it; and ſo has he, I hope—for I have not heard any thing from him theſe two days.

Ld. *T.* Theſe two days! Is it ſo freſh? Unnatural villain! 'Death, I'll have him ſtripp'd and turn'd naked

out of my doors, this moment, and let him rot and perish—incestuous brute!

L. *T.* O for heav'n's sake, my lord, you'll ruin me if you take such public notice of it, it will be a town-talk: consider your own and my honour—nay, I told you you would not be satisfied when you knew it.

Ld. *T.* Before I've done, I will be satisfy'd. Ungrateful monster, how long?——

L. *T.* Lord, I don't know: I wish my lips had grown together when I told you——Almost a twelvemonth—Nay, I won't tell you any more, 'till you are yourself. Pray, my lord, don't let the company see you in this disorder——Yet; I confess, I can't blame you; for I think I was never so surpriz'd in my life——Who would have thought my nephew could have so misconstrued my kindness—But will you go into your closet, and recover your temper. I'll make an excuse of sudden business to the company, and come to you. Pray, good dear my lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come immediately, and tell you all; will you, my lord?

Ld. *T.* I will—I am mute with wonder.

L. *T.* Well, but go now, here's some body coming.

Ld. *T.* Well, I go—You won't stay, for I would hear more of this. [*Exit.*

L. *T.* I follow instantly——So.

Enter Maskwell.

Mask. This was a master-piece, and did not need my help—tho' I stood ready for a cue to come in and confirm all, had there been occasion.

L. *T.* Have you seen *Mellefont?*

Mask. I have; and am to meet him here about this time.

L. *T.* How does he bear his disappointment?

Mask. Secure in my assistance, he seem'd not much afflicted, but rather laugh'd at the shallow artifice, which so little time must of necessity discover. Yet he is apprehensive of some farther design of yours, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your plot, yet I would have you use caution and expedition.

L. *T.* Expedition indeed; for all we do, must be perform'd in the remaining part of this ev'ning, and before the

the company break up; leſt my lord ſhould cool, and have an opportunity to talk with him privately——My lord muſt not ſee him again.

Maſk. By no means, therefore you muſt aggravate my lord's diſpleaſure to a degree that will admit of no conference with him.—What think you of mentioning me?

L. *T.* How?

Maſk. To my lord, as having been privy to *Mellefont*'s deſign upon you, but ſtill uſing my utmoſt endeavours to diſſuade him: tho' my friendſhip and love to him has made me conceal it; yet you may ſay, I threatened the next time he attempted any thing of that kind, to diſcover it to my lord.

L. *T.* To what end is this?

Maſk. It will confirm my lord's opinion of my honour and honeſty, and create in him a new confidence in me, which (ſhould this deſign miſcarry) will be neceſſary to the forming another plot that I have in my head—To cheat you, as well as the reſt [*Aſide.*

L. *T.* I'll do it——'I'll tell him you hindred him 'once from forcing me.'

Maſk. 'Excellent! Your ladyſhip has a moſt improving 'fancy.' You had beſt go to my lord, keep him as long as you can in his cloſet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you pleaſe; your gueſts are ſo engaged in their own follies and intrigues, they'll miſs neither of you.

L. *T.* When ſhall me meet?——At eight this evening in my chamber, there rejoice at our ſucceſs, 'and 'toy away an hour in mirth.'

Maſk. I will not fail. [*Exit. Lady* Touch.

So far all's well, 'yet I know what ſhe means by 'toying away an hour well enough. Pox I have loſt 'all appetite to her; yet ſhe's a fine woman, and I lov'd 'her once. But I don't know, ſince I have been in a 'great meaſure kept by her, the caſe is alter'd; what 'was my pleaſure is become my duty: and I have as 'little ſtomach to her now as if I were her huſband.' Should ſhe ſmoke my deſign upon *Cynthia*, I were in a

fine pickle. She has a 'damn'd' penetrating head, and knows how to interpret a coldneſs the right way; therefore I muſt diſſemble 'ardour and ecſtaſy, that's 'reſolv'd: how eaſily and pleaſantly is that diſſembled 'before fruition! Pox on't that a man can't drink with-'out quenching his thirſt.' Ha! yonder comes *Mellefont* thoughtful. Let me think: meet her at eight—hum—ha! By Heav'n I have it—If I can ſpeak to my lord before—Was it my brain or providence? No matter which—I will deceive 'em all, and yet ſecure myſelf, 'twas a lucky thought! Well, this double-dealing is a jewel. Here he comes, now for me.———

[Maſkwell *pretending not to ſee him, walks by him, and ſpeaks as it were to himſelf.*

Enter Mellefont *muſing.*

Maſk. Mercy on us, what will the wickedneſs of this world come to?

Mel. How now, *Jack?* What, ſo full of contemplation that you run over!

Maſk. I'm glad you're come, for I could not contain myſelf any longer: and was juſt going to give vent to a ſecret, which no body but you ought to drink down.—Your aunt's juſt gone from hence.

Mel. And having truſted thee with the ſecrets of her ſoul, thou art villainouſly bent to diſcover 'em all to me, ha?

Maſk. I'm afraid my frailty leans that way——But I don't know whether I can in honour diſcover 'em all.

Mel. All, all man, what you may in honour betray her as far as ſhe betrays herſelf. No tragical deſign upon my perſon, I hope.

Maſk. No, but it's a comical deſign upon mine.

Mel. What doſt thou mean?

Maſk. Liſten and be dumb, we have been bargaining about the rate of your ruin———

Mel. Like any two guardians to an orphan heireſs—Well.

Maſk. And whereas pleaſure is generally paid with miſchief, what miſchief I do is to be paid with pleaſure.

Mel. So when you've ſwallowed the potion, you ſweeten your mouth with a plumb.

Maſk.

Maſk. You are merry, ſir, but I ſhall probe your conſtitution. In ſhort, the price of your baniſhment is to be paid with the perſon of———

Mel. Of *Cynthia*, and her fortune—Why you forget you told me this before.

Maſk. No, no—So far you are right; and I am, as an earneſt of that bargain, to have full and free poſſeſſion of the perſon of———your aunt.

Mel. Ha!———Pho, you trifle.

Maſk. By this light, I'm ſerious; all raillery apart—I knew 'twould ſtun you: this evening at eight ſhe will receive me in her bed-chamber.

Mel. Hell and the devil, is ſhe abandon'd of all grace—Why the woman is poſſeſs'd———

Maſk. Well, will you go in my ſtead?

Mel. 'By Heav'n' into a hot furnace ſooner.

Maſk. No, you would not—It would not be ſo convenient, as I can order matters.

Mel. What d'ye mean!

Maſk. Mean? Not to diſappoint the lady I aſſure you—Ha, ha, ha! how gravely he looks—Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only thing that fortune could have contriv'd to make me capable of ſerving you, either to my inclination or your own neceſſity.

Mel. How, how, for Heav'n's ſake, dear *Maſkwell?*

Maſk. Why thus—I'll go according to appointment; you ſhall have notice at the critical minute to come and ſurprize your aunt and me together: counterfeit a rage againſt me, and I'll make my eſcape through the private paſſage from her chamber, which I'll take care to leave open: 'Twill be hard, if then you can't bring her to any conditions. For this diſcovery will diſarm her of all defence, and leave her entirely at your mercy: nay, ſhe muſt ever after be in awe of you.

Mel. Let me adore thee, my better *genius!* by Heav'n I think it is not in the power of fate to diſappoint my hopes——My hopes, my certainty!

Maſk. Well, I'll meet you here, within a quarter of eight, and give you notice. [*Exit.*

Mel. Good fortune ever go along with thee!

Enter Careleſs.

Care. Mellefont, get out o' th' way, my lady *Plyant*'s coming, and I ſhall never ſucceed while thou art in ſight —Tho' ſhe begins to tack about; but I made love a great while to no purpoſe.

Mel. Why, what's the matter? She's convinc'd that I don't care for her.

Care. I can't get an anſwer from her, that does not begin with her honour, or her virtue, 'her religion,' or ſome ſuch cant. Then ſhe has told me the whole hiſtory of Sir *Paul*'s nine years courtſhip; how he has lain for whole nights together upon the ſtairs, before her chamber-door; and that the firſt favour he received from her, was a piece of an old ſcarlet petticoat for a ſtomacher; which ſince the day of his marriage, he has, out of a piece of gallantry, converted into a night-cap, and wears it ſtill with much ſolemnity on his anniverſary wedding-night.

Mel. That I have ſeen, with the ceremony thereunto belonging—For on that night he creeps in at the bed's feet like a gull'd Baſſa, that has marry'd a relation of the *Grand Signior*, and that night he has his arms at liberty. Did not ſhe tell you at what a diſtance ſhe keeps him? He has confeſs'd to me that but at ſome certain times, that is I ſuppoſe when ſhe apprehends being with child, he never has the privilege of uſing the familiarity of a huſband with a wife. He was once given to ſcrambling with his hands, and ſprawling in his ſleep; and ever ſince ſhe has him ſwaddled up in blankets, and his hands and feet ſwath'd down, and ſo put to bed; and there he lies with a great beard, like a *Ruſſian* bear upon a drift of ſnow. You are very great with him, I wonder he never told you his grievances, he will I warrant you.

Care. Exceſſively fooliſh!—But that which gives me moſt hopes of her, is her telling me of the many temptations ſhe has reſiſted.

Mel. Nay, then you have her; for a woman's bragging to a man that ſhe has overcome temptations, is an argument that they were weakly offer'd, and a challenge

to

to him to engage her more irresistibly. 'Tis only an 'enhancing the price of the commodity, by telling you 'how many customers have underbid her.

'*Care.* Nay, I don't despair—But still she has a grudg- 'ing to you—I talk'd to her t'other night at my lord '*Froth*'s masquerade, when I'm satisfy'd she knew me, 'and I had no reason to complain of my reception; but 'I find women are not the same bare-faced and in 'masks,——and a vizor disguises their inclinations as 'much as their faces.

'*Mel.* 'Tis a mistake, for women may most properly 'be said to be unmask'd when they wear vizors; for that 'secures them from blushing, and being out of coun- 'tenance, and next to being in the dark, or alone, they 'are most truly themselves in a vizor mask.' Here they come, I'll leave you. Ply her close, and by and by clap a *billet-doux* into her hand: for a woman never thinks a man truly in love with her, 'till he has been fool enough to think of her out of her sight, and to lose so much time as to write to her. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Paul *and Lady* Plyant.

Sir *Paul.* Shan't we disturb your meditation, Mr. *Careless.* You wou'd be private?

Care. You bring that along with you, Sir *Paul*, that shall be always welcome to my privacy.

Sir *Paul.* O, sweet Sir, you load your humble servants, both me and my wife, with continual favours.

L. *P.* Sir *Paul*, what a phrase was there? You will be making answers, and taking that upon you, which ought to lie upon me: that you should have so little breeding to think Mr. *Careless* did not apply himself to me. Pray what have you to entertain any bodies privacy? I swear and declare in the face of the world I'm ready to blush for your ignorance.

Sir *Paul.* I acquiesce, my lady; but don't snub so loud. [*Aside to her.*

L. *P.* Mr. *Careless*, if a person that is wholly illiterate might be supposed to be capable of being qualify'd to make a suitable return to those obligations which you are pleased to confer upon one that is wholly incapable

of being qualify'd in all thoſe circumſtances, I'm ſure I ſhou'd rather attempt it than any thing in the world, [*Courteſies.*] for I'm ſure there's nothing in the world that I would rather. [*Courteſies*] But I know Mr. *Careleſs* is ſo great a critick and ſo fine a gentleman, that it is impoſſible for me.———

Care. O Heav'ns! Madam, you confound me.

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud, ſhe'ɛ a fine perſon———

L. *P.* O lord! Sir, pardon me, we women have not thoſe advantages: I know my own imperfections—But at the ſame time you muſt give me leave to declare in the face of the world, that no body is more ſenſible of favours and things; for with the reſerve of my honour, I aſſure you, Mr. *Carleeſs*, I don't know any thing in the world I would refuſe to a perſon ſo meritorious——— You'll pardon my want of expreſſion.———

Care. O your ladyſhip is abounding in all excellence, particularly that of phraſe.

L. *P.* You are ſo obliging, ſir.

Care. Your ladyſhip is ſo charming.

Sir *Paul.* So, now, now; now, my lady.

L. *P.* So well bred.

Care. So ſurprizing.

L. *P.* So well dreſt, ſo *bonne mine*, ſo eloquent, ſo unaffected, ſo eaſy, ſo free, ſo particular, ſo agreeable———

Sir *Paul.* Ay, ſo, ſo, there.

Care. O lord, I beſeech you, madam, don't———

L. *P.* So gay, ſo graceful, ſo good teeth, ſo fine ſhape, ſo fine limbs, ſo fine linen, and I don't doubt but you have a very good ſkin, ſir.

Care. For Heav'n's ſake, madam——I'm quite out of countenance.

Sir *Paul.* And my lady's quite out of breath; or elſe you ſhould hear—Gad's-bub, you may talk of my lady *Froth*.

Care. O fy, fy, not to be named of a day—My lady *Froth* is very well in her accompliſhments—But it is when my Lady *Plyant* is not thought of——If that can ever be.

L. *P.* O you overcome me—That is ſo exceſſive.

Sir *Paul.* Nay, I swear and vow that was pretty.

Care. O Sir *Paul*, you are the happiest man alive. Such a lady! that is the envy of her own sex, and the admiration of ours.

Sir *Paul.* Your humble servant, I am, I thank Heav'n, in a fine way of living, as I may say, peacefully and happily, and I think need not envy any of my neighbours, blessed be Providence——Ay, truly, Mr. *Careless*, my lady is a great blessing, a fine, discreet, well-spoken woman as you shall see—If it becomes me to say so; and we live very comfortably together; she is a little hasty sometimes, and so am I; but mine's soon over, and then I'm so sorry—O Mr. *Careless*, if it were not for one thing——

Enter Boy with a letter, and offers it to Sir Paul.

L. *P.* How often have you been told of that, you jackanapes?

Sir *Paul.* Gad so, gad's-bud——*Tim.* carry it to my lady, you should have carry'd it to my lady first.

Boy. 'Tis directed to your worship.

Sir *Paul.* Well, well, my lady reads all letters first.—Child, do so no more; d'ye hear, *Tim.*

Boy. No, and please you. [*Exit.*

Sir Paul. A humour of my wife's, you know women have little fancies—But as I was telling you, Mr. *Careless*, if it were not for one thing, I should think myself the happiest man in the world; indeed that touches me near, very near.

Care. What can that be, Sir *Paul?*

Sir *Paul.* Why, I have, I thank Heav'n, a very plentiful fortune, a good estate in the country, some houses in town, and some money, a pretty tolerable personal estate; and it is a great grief to me, indeed it is, Mr. *Careless* that I have not a son to inherit this.--'Tis true, I have a daughter, and a fine dutiful child she is, though I say it, blessed be Providence I may say; for indeed, Mr. *Careless*, I am mightily beholden to Providence—A poor unworthy sinner—But if I had a son, ah, that's my affliction, and my only affliction; indeed I cannot refrain tears when it comes in my mind. [*Cries.*

Care.

Care. why, methinks that might be eaſily remedied—my lady's a fine likely woman———

Sir Paul. Oh, a fine likely woman as you ſhall ſee in a ſummer's day——Indeed ſhe is, Mr. *Careleſs*, in all reſpects.

Care. And I ſhould not have taken you to have been ſo old———

Sir *Paul.* Alas, that's not it, Mr. *Careleſs*; ah! that's not it; no, no, you ſhoot wide of the mark a mile; indeed you do, that's not it, Mr. *Careleſs*; no, no, that's not it.

Care. No, what can be the matter then?

Sir *Paul.* You'll ſcarcely believe me, when I ſhall tell you—my lady is ſo nice——It's very ſtrange, but it's true: too true—ſhe's ſo very nice, that I don't believe ſhe would touch a man for the world——At leaſt not above once a year; I'm ſure I have found it ſo; and alas, what's once a year to an old man, who would do good in his generation? Indeed it's true, Mr. *Careleſs*, it breaks my heart—I am her huſband, as I may ſay; though far unworthy of that honour, yet I am her huſband; but alas-a-day, I have no more familiarity with her perſon—as to that matter——than with my own mother—no indeed.

Care. Alas-a-day, this is a lamentable ſtory; my lady muſt be told on't; ſhe muſt i'faith, Sir *Paul*; 'tis an injury to the world.

Sir *Paul.* Ah! would to Heav'n you would, Mr. *Careleſs*; you are mightily in her favour.

Care. I warrant you, what we muſt have a ſon ſome way or other.

Sir *Paul.* Indeed, I ſhould be mightily bound to you, if you could bring it about, Mr. *Careleſs*.

L. *P.* Here, Sir *Paul*, it's from your Steward, here's a return of 600 pounds; you may take fifty of it for the next half year. [*Gives him the letter.*

Enter Lord Froth, *and* Cynthia.

Sir *Paul.* how does my girl? come hither to thy father, poor lamb, thou'rt melancholick,

Ld. *Froth.* Heav'n, Sir *Paul*, you amaze me of all things in the world—you are never pleas'd but when we are

are all upon the broad grin; all laugh and no company; ah, then 'tis such a sight to see some teeth—sure you're a great admirer of my lady *Whisler*, Mr. *Sneer*, and Sir *Laurence Loud*, and that gang.

Sir *Paul*. I vow and swear she's a very merry woman, but I think she laughs a little too much.

Ld. *Froth*. Merry! O Lord, what a character that is of a woman of quality——you have been at my lady *Whisler*'s upon her day, madam;

Cynt. Yes, my Lord—I must humour this fool. [*Aside*.

Ld. *Froth*. Well and how? hee! what is your sense of the conversation?

Cynt. O most ridiculous, a perpetual consort of laughing without any harmony; for sure, my Lord, to laugh out of time, is as disagreeable as to sing out of time or out of tune.

Ld. *Froth*. Hee, hee, hee, right! and then, my lady *Whisler* is so ready——she always comes in three bars too soon—and then, what do they laugh at? for you know laughing without a jest is as impertinent; hee! as, as—

Cynt. As dancing without a fiddle.

Ld. *Froth*. Just i'faith, that was at my tongue's end.

Cynt. But that cannot be properly said of them, for I think they are all in good nature with the world, and only laugh at one another, and you must allow they have all jests in their persons, though they have none in their conversation.

Ld. *Froth*. True, as I'm a person of honour——for Heav'ns sake let us sacrifice 'em to mirth a little.

Enter Boy and whispers Sir Paul.

Sir *Paul*. Gads so—wife, wife, my lady *Plyant*, I have a word.

L. *P*. I'm busy, Sir *Paul*, I wonder at your impertinence————

Care. Sir *Paul*, harkee, I'm reasoning the matter you know; madam,—if your ladyship please, we'll discourse of this in the next room.

[*Exeunt* Careless *and Lady* Plyant.

Sir *Paul*. O ho, I wish you good success, I wish you good success. Boy, tell my lady, when she has done, I would speak with her below. [*Exit*.

Enter

Enter Lady Froth *and* Brisk.

L. *Froth.* Then you think that *episode* between *Susan*, the dairy-maid, and our coach-man is not amiss; you know, I may suppose the dairy in town, as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish —but then being an heroick poem, had not you better call him a *Charioteer? Charioteer* sounds great; besides your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun—and you know the sun is call'd *Heav'n's Charioteer.*

L. *Froth.* Oh, infinitely better; I'm extremely beholden to you for the hint; stay, we'll read over those half a score lines again. [*Pulls out a paper.*] Let me see here, you know what goes before——the comparison, you know. [Reads]

For as the sun shines ev'ry day,
So of our coachman I may say.

Brisk. I'm afraid that simile won't do in wet weather ——because you say the sun shines ev'ry day.

L. *Froth.* No, for the sun it won't, but it will do for the coach-man, for you know their's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right, that saves all.

L. *Froth.* Then I don't say the sun shines all the day, but that he peeps now and then, yet he does shine all the day too, you know, tho' we don't see him.

Brisk. Right, but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

L. *Froth.* Well, you shall hear—let me see. Reads] *For as the sun shines ev'ry day,*

So, of our coach-man I may say,
He shews his drunken fiery face,
Just as the sun does more or less.

Brisk. That's right, all's well, all's well. *More or less.*

L. *Froth* [reads] *And when at night his labour's done,*
Then too, like Heav'ns Charioteer the sun:

Ay, *Charioteer* does better.

Into the dairy he descends,
And there his whipping and his driving ends;

There

There he's ſecure from danger of a bilk.
His fare is paid him, and he ſets in milk.

For *Suſan*, you know, is *Thetis*, and ſo———

Brisk. Incomparable well and proper, I'gad——But I have one exception to make——Don't you think *bilk* (I know its good rhyme) but don't you think *bilk* and *fare* too like a hackney coachman?

L. *Froth.* I ſwear and vow I'm afraid ſo——And yet our *Jehu* was a hackney-coachman, when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I'm anſwer'd, if *Jehu* was a hackney coachman—You may put that in the marginal notes tho', to prevent criticiſm—Only mark it with a ſmall aſteriſm, and ſay,———*Jehu* was formerly a hackney coachman.

L. *Froth.* I will; you'd oblige me extremely to write notes to the whole poem.

Brisk. With all my heart and ſoul, and proud of the vaſt honour, let me periſh.

Ld. *Froth.* Hee, hee, hee! my dear have you done—won't you join with us, we were laughing at my lady *Whiſter*, and Mr. *Sneer*.

L. *Froth.*——Ay my dear——Were you? O filthy Mr. *Sneer*; he's a nauſeous figure, a moſt fulſamick fop, foh———He ſpent two days together in going about *Covent-garden* to ſuit the lining of his coach with his complexion.

Ld. *Froth.* O ſilly! yet his aunt is as fond of him, as if ſhe had brought the ape into the world herſelf.

Brisk. Who, my Lady *Toothleſs*; Oh, ſhe's a mortifying ſpectacle; ſhe's always chewing the cud like an old *ewe*.

Cynt. Fy, Mr. *Brisk*, *Eringo*'s for her cough.

L. *Froth.* I have ſeen her take 'em half chew'd out of her mouth, to laugh, and then put 'em in again—Foh.

Ld. *Froth.* Foh.

L. *Froth.* Then ſhe's always ready to laugh when *Sneer* offers to ſpeak—And ſits in expectation of his no jeſt, with her gums bare, and her mouth open———

Brisk. Like an oyſter at low ebb, I'gad—Ha, ha, ha!

Cynt. [*Aſide.*] Well, I find there are no fools ſo inconſiderable

ſiderable in themſelves, but they can render other people contemptible by expoſing their infirmities.

L. *Froth.* Then that t'other great ſtrapping lady—I can't hit of her name; the old fat fool that paints ſo exorbitantly.

Brisk. I know whom you mean——But deuce take me I can't hit of her name neither—Paints, d'ye ſay? Why ſhe lays it on with a trowel——Then ſhe has a great beard that briſtles through it, and makes her look as if ſhe were plaiſter'd with lime and hair, let me periſh.

'L. *Froth.* Oh you made a ſong upon her, Mr. *Brisk.*

'*Brisk.* He? egad, ſo I did——My Lord can ſing it.

'*Cynt.* O good my Lord let's hear it.

'*Brisk.* 'Tis not a ſong neither—Its a ſort of an epi-
'gram, or rather an epigrammatick ſonnet; I don't know
'what to call it, but it's ſatire.——Sing it, my Lord.

'*Lord* Froth *ſings.*

'*Ancient* Phillis *has young graces,*
'*'Tis a ſtrange thing but a true one;*
'*Shall I tell you how?*
'*She herſelf makes her own faces,*
'*And each morning wears a new one;*
'*Where's the wonder now?*

'*Brisk.* Short, but there's ſalt in't; my way of writ-
'ing, I'gad.'

Enter Footman.

L. *Froth.* How now?

Foot. Your ladyſhip's chair is come.

L. *Froth.* Is nurſe and the child in it?

Foot. Yes, madam.

L. *Froth.* O the dear creature! let's go ſee it.

Ld. *Froth.* I ſwear, my dear, you'll ſpoil that child, with ſending it to and again ſo often, this is the ſeventh time the chair has gone for her to day.

L. *Froth.* O-law, I ſwear its but the ſixth—and I han't ſeen her theſe two hours——The poor dear creature——I ſwear, my lord, you don't love poor little *Sapho,* ——Come, my dear *Cynthia,* Mr. *Brisk,* we'll go ſee *Sapho,* tho' my Lord won't.

Cynt.

Cynt. I'll wait upon your ladyſhip.

Brisk. Pray, madam, how old is Lady *Sapho?*

L. *Froth.* Three quarters, but I ſwear ſhe has a world of wit, and can ſing a tune already. My Lord, won't you go? Won't you? What not to ſee *Saph?* Pray, my Lord, come ſee little *Saph.* I knew you cou'd not ſtay.

[*Exit. Ld.* Froth, *L.* Froth *and* Briſk.

Cynt. 'Tis not ſo hard to counterfeit joy in the depth 'of affliction, as to diſſemble mirth in company of fools '——Why ſhould I call 'em fools? The world thinks 'better of 'em; for theſe have quality and education, wit 'and fine converſation, are receiv'd and admir'd by the 'world—If not, they like and admire themſelves—— 'And why is not that true wiſdom, for 'tis happineſs; 'And for ought I know, we have miſapply'd the name, 'all this while, and miſtaken the thing: Since

'If happineſs in ſelf-content is plac'd,
'The wiſe are wretched, and fools only bleſs'd.' [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

Enter Mellefont *and* Cynthia.

Cynt. I Heard him loud as I came by the cloſet door, and my lady with him, but ſhe ſeem'd to moderate his paſſion.

Mel. Ay, 'hell thank her,' as gentle breezes moderate a fire; but I ſhall counter-work her ſpells, 'and ride the witch in her own bridle.'

Cynt. It's impoſſible; ſhe'll caſt beyond you ſtill——I'll lay my life it will never be a match.

Mel. What?

Cynt. Between you and me.

Mel. Why ſo?

'*Cynt.* My mind gives me it won't——becauſe we 'are both willing; we each of us ſtrive to reach the goal,

'and

'and hinder one another in the race; I swear it never does 'well when the parties are so agreed—For when people 'walk hand in hand, there's neither overtaking nor meet- 'ing: we hunt in couples where we both pursue the 'same game, but forget one another; and 'tis because 'we are so near that we don't think of coming together.

'*Mel.* Hum, 'gad I believe there's something in't;—'marriage is the game that we hunt, and while we think 'that we only have it in view, I don't see but we have it 'in our power.

'*Cynt.* Within reach; for example, give me your hand; 'you have look'd thro' the wrong end of the perspec- 'tive all this while; for nothing has been between us 'but our fears,'

Mel. I don't know why we should not steal out of the house this very moment and marry one another, without consideration or the fear of repentance. Plague o'fortune, portion, settlements and jointures.

Cynt. Ay, ay, what have we to do with 'em; you know we marry for love.

Mel. Love, love, down-right very villainous love.

Cynt. 'And he that can't live upon love, deserves to 'die in a ditch.'—Here then, I give you my promise, in spite of duty, any temptation of wealth, your inconstancy, or my own inclination to change———

Mel. To run most wilfully and unreasonably away with me this moment, and be married.

Cynt. Hold——Never to marry any body else.

Mel. That's but a kind of negative consent——Why, you won't balk the frolick?

Cynt. If you had not been so assured of your own conduct I would not——But 'tis but reasonable that since I consent to like a man without the vile consideration of money, he should give a very evident demonstration of his wit: therefore let me see you undermine my Lady *Touchwood*, as you boasted, and force her to give her consent, and then——

Mel. I'll do't.

Cynt. And I'll do't.

Mel. This very next ensuing hour of eight a clock, is the

the laſt minute of her reign, unleſs the devil aſſiſt her in *propria perſona*.

Cynt. Well, if the devil ſhould aſſiſt her, and your plot miſcarry.———

Mel. Ay, what am I to truſt to then?

Cynt. Why if you give me very clear demonſtration that it was the devil, I'll allow for irreſiſtible odds. But if I find it to be only chance, or deſtiny, or unlucky ſtars, or any thing but the very devil, I'm inexorable: only ſtill I'll keep my word; and live unmarried for your ſake.

'*Mel.* And you won't die one, for your own, ſo ſtill 'there's hope.

'*Cynt.*' Here's my mother-in-law, and your friend *Careleſs*, I would not have 'em ſee us together yet. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Careleſs *and Lady* Plyant.

L. *P.* I ſwear, Mr. *Careleſs*, you are very alluring—And ſay ſo many fine things, and nothing is ſo moving to me as a fine thing. Well, I muſt do you this juſtice, and declare in the face of the world, never any body gain'd ſo far upon me as yourſelf; with bluſhes I muſt own it, you have ſhaken, as I may ſay, the very foundation of my honour——Well, ſure if I eſcape your importunities, I ſhall value myſelf as long as I live, I ſwear.

Care. And deſpiſe me. [*Sighing.*

L. *P.* The laſt of any man in the world, by my purity; now you make me ſwear—O gratitude forbid, that I ſhould ever be wanting in a reſpectful acknowledgment of an intire reſignation of all my beſt wiſhes, for the perſon and parts of ſo accompliſh'd and ſo fine a gentleman, whoſe merit challenges much more, I'm ſure, than my illiterate praiſes can, deſcription———

Care [*In a whining tone.*] Ah Heav'ns, madam, you ruin me with kindneſs; your charming tongue purſues the victory of your eyes, while at your feet your poor adorer dies.

L. *P.* Ah! very fine.

Care. [*Still whining.*] Ah why are you ſo fair, ſo bewitching fair? O let me grow to the ground here, and feaſt

feaſt upon that hand; O let me preſs it to my heart, my trembling heart, the nimble movement ſhall inſtruct your pulſe, and teach it to alarm deſire.

[*'Zoons! I'm almoſt at the end of my cant, if ſhe does not yield quickly.* [*Aſide*

L. *P.* O that's ſo paſſionate and fine, I cannot hear it—I am not ſafe if I ſtay, and muſt leave you.

Care. And muſt you leave me! rather let me languiſh out a wretched life, and breathe my ſoul beneath your feet. [*I muſt ſay the ſame thing over again, and can't help it.* [*Aſide.*

L. *P.* I ſwear I'm ready to languiſh too——O my honour! whither is it going? I proteſt you have given me the palpitation of the heart.

Care. Can you be ſo cruel.——

L. *P.* O riſe I beſeech you, ſay no more 'till you riſe—Why did you kneel ſo long? I ſwear I was ſo tranſported, I did not ſee it,——Well, to ſhew you how far you have gain'd upon me; I aſſure you if Sir *Paul* ſhould die, of all mankind there's none I'd ſooner make my ſecond choice.

Care. O Heav'n! I can't out-live this night without your favour——I feel my ſpirits faint, a general dampneſs over-ſpreads my face, a cold deadly dew already vents through all my pores, and will to-morrow waſh me for ever from your ſight, and drown me in my tomb.

L. *P.* O you have conquer'd, ſweet, melting, ſmvoing ſir, you have conquer'd——What heart of marble can refrain to weep, and yield to ſuch ſad ſayings.—[*Cries.*

Care. I thank Heav'n, they are the ſaddeſt that I ever ſaid——Oh! [*I ſhall never contain laughter.* [*Aſide.*

L. *P.* Oh, I yield myſelf all up to your uncontrollable embraces——Say, thou dear dying man, when, where, and how.——Ah, there's Sir *Paul.*

Care. 'Slife, yonder's Sir *Paul,* but if he were not come, I'm ſo tranſported I cannot ſpeak——This note will inform you. [*Gives her a note.*

[*Exit.*

Enter Sir Paul, Plyant *and* Cynthia.

Sir *Paul.* Thou art my tender lambkin, and ſhalt do what thou wilt—But endeavour to forget this *Mellefont.*

Cynt.

d ad viv. del. *Walker sculp*

Mr. PALMER and Mrs. GARDINER,
in the Character of
CARELESS and LADY PLYANT.

Car. *Can you be so cruel*
L.Ply. *I rise I beseech you.* *Act 4. Sc. 2.*

Cynt. I would obey you to my power, ſir; but if I have not him, I have ſworn never to marry.

Sir *Paul.* Never to marry! Heav'ns forbid: muſt I neither have ſons nor grandſons? Muſt the family of the *Plyants* be utterly extinct for want of iſſue male. Oh impiety! but did you ſwear, did that ſweet creature ſwear! ha? How durſt you ſwear without my conſent, ah? gads-bud, who am I?

Cynt. Pray don't be angry, ſir, when I ſwore, I had your conſent; and therefore I ſwore.

Sir *Paul.* Why then the revoking my conſent does annul, or make of none effect your oath: So you may unſwear it again——The law will allow it.

Cynt. Ay, but my conſcience never will.

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud no matter for that, conſcience and law never go together; you muſt not expect that.

L. *P.* Ay, but Sir *Paul,* I conceive if ſhe has ſworn, d'ye mark me, if ſhe has once ſworn, it is moſt unchriſtian, inhuman, and obſcene that ſhe ſhou'd break it.—I'll make up the match again, becauſe Mr. *Careleſs* ſaid it would oblige him. [*Aſide.*

Sir *Paul.* Does your ladyſhip conceive ſo——Why I was of that opinion once too——Nay if your ladyſhip conceives ſo, I'm of that opinion again; but I can neither find my lord nor my lady to know what they intend.

L. *P.* I'm ſatisfy'd that my couſin *Mellefont* has been much wrong'd.

Cynt. [*Aſide.*] I'm amaz'd to find her of our ſide, for I'm ſure ſhe lov'd him.

L. *P.* I know my Lady *Touchwood* has no kindneſs for him; and beſides I have been inform'd by Mr. *Careleſs,* that *Mellefont* had never any thing more than a profound reſpect——That he has own'd himſelf to be my admirer 'tis true, but he was never ſo preſumptuous to entertain any diſhonourable notions of things; ſo that if this be made plain——I don't ſee how my daughter can in conſcience, or honour, or any thing in the world—

Sir *Paul.* Indeed if this be made plain, as my lady your mother ſays, child——

L. *P.*

L. *P.* Plain! I was inform'd of it by Mr. *Careleſs*—And I aſſure you Mr. *Careleſs* is a perſon——that has a moſt extraordinary reſpect and honour for you, Sir *Paul.*

Cynt. [*Aſide.*] And for your ladyſhip too, I believe, or elſe you had not chang'd ſides ſo ſoon; now I begin to find it.

Sir *Paul.* I am much obliged to Mr. *Careleſs* really, he is a perſon that I have a great value for, not only for that, but becauſe he has a great veneration for your ladyſhip.

L. *P.* O las, no indeed, Sir *Paul*, 'tis upon your account.

Sir *Paul.* No I proteſt and vow, I have no title to his eſteem, but in having the honour to appertain in ſome meaſure to your ladyſhip, that's all.

L. *P.* O law now, I ſwear and declare, it ſhan't be ſo, you're too modeſt, Sir *Paul.*

Sir *Paul.* It becomes me, when there is any compariſon made, between your ladyſhip and your moſt obedient obſequious, devoted, and unamour'd adorer Sir *Paul Plyant.*

L. *P.* O fy, fy, Sir *Paul*, you'll put me out of countenance——Your very obedient and affectionate wife; that's all——And highly honour'd in that title.

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud I am tranſported! Give me leave to kiſs your ladyſhip's hand.

Cynt. That my poor father ſhould be ſo very ſilly! [*Aſide.*

L. *P.* My lip indeed, Sir *Paul*, I ſwear you ſhall.

[*He kiſſes her, and bows very low.*

Sir *Paul.* I humbly thank your ladyſhip——I don't know whether I fly on ground, or walk in air—Gads-bud, ſhe was never thus before—Well, I muſt own myſelf the moſt beholden to Mr. *Careleſs*——As ſure as can be this is all his doing,——ſomething that he has ſaid; well, 'tis a rare thing to have an ingenious friend. Well, your ladyſhip is of opinion that the match may go forward.

L. *P.* By all means——Mr. *Careleſs* has ſatisfy'd me of the matter.

Sir *Paul.* Well, why then, lamb, you may keep your path

oath, but have a care of making rash vows; come hither to me, and kiss *Papa*.

L. *P.* I swear and declare, I am in such a twitter to read Mr. *Careless* his letter, that I can't forbear any longer —But tho' I may read all letters first by prerogative, yet I'll be sure to be unsuspected this time.—Sir *Paul*.

Sir *Paul*. Did your ladyship call?

L. *P.* Nay, not to interrupt you, my dear——Only lend me your letter, which you had from your steward to day: I would look upon the account again; and may be increase your allowance.

Sir *Paul*. There it is, madam; do you want a pen and ink? [*Bows and gives the letter.*

L. *P.* No, no, nothing else, I thank you, Sir *Paul*— So now I can read my own letter under the cover of his. [*Aside.*

Sir *Paul*. He? And wilt thou bring a grandson at nine months end———He? A brave chopping boy.——I'll settle a thousand pound a year upon the rogue as soon as ever he looks me in the face, I will, gads-bud. "*I hope* "*the young cherub will be like me; I wou'd fain have some* "*resemblance of myself in my posterity—ha*—Thy—*Shou'dn't* "*you wish he was like his Grand* Papa." 'I'm overjoy'd 'to think I have any of my family that will bring 'children into the world. For I would fain have some 'resemblance of myself in my posterity, he *Thy?* Can't 'you contrive that affair, girl? Do gads-bud, think on 'thy old father; heh? Make the young rogue as like as 'you can.'

Cynt. I'm glad to see you so merry, sir.

Sir *Paul*. Merry, gads-bud I'm serious, I'll give thee 500 *l*. for every feature of him that resembles me; ah, this eye, this left eye! a thousand pound for this left eye. This has done execution in its time, girl; why thou hast my leer, hussy, just thy father's leer.———Let it be transmitted to the young rogue by the help of imagination; why 'tis the mark of our family *Thy*; our house is distinguish'd by a languishing eye, as the house of *Austria* is by a thick lip.——Ah! when I was of your age, hussy, I would have held fifty to one, I could have drawn

my own picture——Gads-bud, I could have done——
'not so much as you neither,——but——nay, don't
'blush——

'*Cynt.* I don't blush, sir, for I vow I don't understand—

'Sir *Paul.* Pshaw, pshaw, you fib, you baggage, you do 'understand, and you shall understand; come don't be so 'nice, gads-bud, don't learn after your mother-in-law my 'lady here: Marry Heav'n forbid that you should fol- 'low her example, that would spoil all indeed. Bless us, 'if you should take a vagary and make a rash resolution 'on your wedding night, to die a maid, as she did; all 'were ruin'd, all my hopes lost——My heart would 'break, and my estate would be left to the wide world, 'he? I hope you are a better christian than to think of 'living a nun; he? Answer me?

'*Cynt.* I'm all obedience, sir, to your commands.'

L. *P.* [*Having read the letter.*] O dear Mr. *Careless*, I swear he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charm'd me, as much as I have charm'd him; and so I'll tell him in the wardrobe when 'tis dark. O crimine! I hope Sir *Paul* has not seen both letters. [*Puts the wrong letter hastily up, and gives him her own.*] Sir *Paul*, here's your letter, to morrow morning I'll settle accounts to your advantage.

"*Sir* Paul. *I humbly thank your ladyship.*

"L. P. *So now I'll retire and study a complimentary re-* "*buke to Mr.* Careless *for the pathetic tender of his re-* "*gards, but it shall not be too severe neither.*" [Exit.

Enter Brisk.

Brisk. Sir *Paul*, Gads-bud you're an uncivil person, let me tell you, and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir *Paul.* O law, what's the matter now? I hope you are not angry Mr. *Brisk.*

Brisk. Deuce take me I believe you intend to marry your daughter yourself; you're always brooding over her like an old hen, as if she were not well hatch'd, I'gad, he?

Sir *Paul.* Good strange! Mr. *Brisk* is such a merry facetious person, he, he, he! No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Brisk.

Brisk. The fiddles have ſtay'd this hour in the hall, and my Lord *Froth* wants a partner; we can never begin without her.

Sir *Paul.* Go, go, child, go, get you gone and dance and be merry, I'll come and look at you by and by.—Where's my ſon *Mellefont?*

'L.*P.* I'll ſend him to them, I know where he is——'

Brisk. Sir *Paul,* will you ſend *Careleſs* into the hall if you meet him.

Sir *Paul.* I will, I will, I'll go and look for him on purpoſe. [*Exeunt Sir* Paul, *and* Cynthia.

Brisk. So now they are all gone, and I have an opportunity to practiſe.—Ah! My dear Lady *Froth!* She's a moſt engaging creature; if ſhe were not ſo fond of that 'damn'd' coxcombly lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him wit too, to keep in with him—No matter, ſhe's a woman of parts, and I'gad parts will carry her. She ſaid ſhe would follow me into the gallery——Now to make my approaches——Hem! hem! Ah madam!——[*Bows.*] Plague on't, why ſhould I diſparage my parts by thinking what to ſay? None but dull rogues *think*; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expences; while your blockheads, like poor needy ſcoundrels, are forced to examine their ſtock, and forecaſt the charges of the day. Here ſhe comes, I'll ſeem not to ſee her, and try to win her with a new airy invention of my own, hem!

Enter Lady Froth.

[Briſk *ſings, walking about*] *I'm ſick with love,* ha, ha, ha! *pr'ythee come cure me.*

I'm ſick with, &c.

O ye Pow'rs! O my Lady *Froth,* my Lady *Froth!* My Lady *Froth!* Heigho! Break heart; gods I thank you.

[*Stands muſing with his arms a-croſs.*

L. *Froth.* O Heav'ns, Mr. *Briſk!* What's the matter?

Brisk. My Lady *Froth!* Your ladyſhip's moſt humble ſervant;——The matter, madam? Nothing, madam, nothing at all I'gad. I was fallen into the moſt agreeable amuſement in the whole province of contemplation: that's all——(I'll ſeem to conceal my paſſion, and that will look like reſpect.) [*Aſide.*

L. *Froth.* Bleſs me, why did you call out upon me ſo loud?———

Brisk. O Lord I madam? I beſeech your ladyſhip——when?

L. *Froth.* Juſt now as I came in, bleſs me, why don't you know it?

Briſk. Not I, let me periſh——But did I! Strange! I confeſs your ladyſhip was in my thoughts; and I was in a ſort of dream that did in a manner repreſent a very pleaſing object to my imagination, but——but did I indeed?——To ſee how love and murder will out. But did I really name my Lady *Froth?*

L. *Froth.* Three times aloud, as I love letters—But did you talk of love? O *Parnaſſus!* Who would have thought Mr. *Briſk* could have been in love, ha, ha, ha! O Heav'ns! I thought you cou'd have no miſtreſs but the Nine Muſes.

Briſk. No more I have I'gad, for I adore 'em all in your ladyſhip——Let me periſh, I don't know whether to be ſplenetick, or airy upon't; the deuce take me if I can tell whether I am glad or ſorry that your ladyſhip has made the diſcovery.

L. *Froth.* O be merry by all means——Prince *Volſcius* in love! Ha, ha, ha!

Briſk. O barbarous, to turn me into ridicule! Yet, ha, ha, ha! The deuce take me, I can't help laughing my ſelf, ha, ha, ha! yet 'by Heav'ns' I have a violent paſſion for your ladyſhip, ſeriouſly.

L. *Froth.* Seriouſly? ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriouſly, ha, ha, ha! Gad I have, for all I laugh.

L. *Froth.* Ha, ha, ha! What d'ye think I laugh at? Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Me I'gad, ha, ha!

Ld. *Froth.* No, the deuce take me if I don't laugh at myſelf; for hang me if I have not a violent paſſion for Mr. *Brisk*, ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriouſly?

L. *Froth.* Seriouſly, ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. That's well enough; let me periſh, ha, ha, ha! O miraculous, what a happy diſcovery! Ay my dear charming Lady *Froth!*

L. *Froth.*

L. *Froth.* Oh my adored Mr. *Brisk!* [*Embrace.*

Enter Lord *Froth.*

Ld. *Froth.* The company are all ready——How now!

Brisk. Zoons, madam, there's my lord [*Softly to her.*

L. *Froth.* Take no notice——but observe me——Now cast off, and meet me at the lower end of the room, and then join hands again; I could teach my lord this dance purely, but I vow, Mr. *Brisk*, I can't tell how to come so near any other man. Oh here's my lord, now you shall see me do it with him.

[*They pretend to practise part of a country dance.*

Ld. *Froth.*——Oh I see there's no harm yet——But I don't like this familiarity. [*Aside.*

L. *Froth.*——Shall you and I do our close dance, to shew Mr. *Brisk?*

Ld. *Froth.* No, my dear, do it with him

L. *Froth.* I'll do it with him, my lord, when you are out of the way.

Brisk. That's good I'gad, that's good, deuce take me I can hardly hold laughing in his face. [*Aside.*

Ld. *Froth.* Any other time, my dear, or we'll dance it below.

L. *Froth.* With all my heart.

Brisk. Come my lord, I'll wait on you—My charming witty angel! [*To her.*

L. *Froth.* We shall have whispering time enough, you know, since we are partners. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady Plyant, *and* Careless

L. *P.* O Mr. *Careless*, Mr. *Careless*, I'm ruin'd, I'm undone!

Care. What's the matter, madam?

L. *P.* O the unlucky'st accident, I'm afraid I shan't live to tell it you!

Care. Heav'n forbid! What is it?

L. *P.* I'm in such a fright; the strangest quandary and premunire! I'm all over in an universal agitation, I dare swear every circumstance of me trembles.——O your letter, your letter! By an unfortunate mistake, I have given Sir *Paul* your letter instead of his own.

Care. That was unlucky.

L. *P.* O yonder he comes reading of it, for Heav'ns ſake ſtep in here and adviſe me quickly, before he ſees. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Paul *with the letter.*

Sir *Paul.*——O Providence, what a conſpiracy have I diſcover'd——But let me ſee to make an end on't. ——[*Reads.*] Hum——*After ſupper in the wardrobe by the gallery. If Sir* Paul *ſhould ſurprize us, I have a commiſſion from him to treat with you about the very matter of fact*——Matter of fact! Very pretty; it ſeems then I am conducing to my own cuckoldom; why this is the very traiterous poſition of taking up arms by my authority, againſt my perſon! Well, let me ſee—*'Till then I languiſh in expectation of my adored charmer.*

Dying Ned. Careleſs, Gads-bud, would that were matter of fact too. Thou *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Iſcariot* both. O friendſhip! What art thou but a name? Henceforth let no man that is married take a friend into the boſom of his family! for if he does—O we know what will follow from the example of Sir *Paul Plyant*, and his boſom friend *Ned Careleſs*. O my lady, have I for this been pinion'd night after night for three years paſt? Have I been ſwath'd in blankets 'till I have been even depriv'd of motion? Have I approach'd the marriage bed with reverence as to a ſacred ſhrine, 'and deny'd myſelf the 'enjoyment of lawful and domeſtick pleaſures to pre-'ſerve its purity, and muſt I now find it polluted by fo-'reign iniquity?' O my lady *Plyant*, you were chaſte as ice, but you are melted now, and falſe as water.—— But Providence has been conſtant to me in diſcovering this conſpiracy: ſtill I am beholden to Providence, if it were not for Providence, ſure, poor Sir *Paul*, thy heart would break.

Enter Lady Plyant.

L. *P.* So, ſir, I ſee you have read the letter——Well now, Sir *Paul*, what do you think of your friend *Careleſs?* Has he been treacherous, or did you give his inſolence a licence to make trial of your wife's ſuſpected virtue? D'ye ſee here? [*Snatches the letter as in anger.*] Look,

Look, read it? Gad's my life if I thought it were ſo, I would this moment renounce all communication with you. Ungrateful monſter! He? Is it ſo? Ay, I ſee it, a plot upon my honour, your guilty cheeks confeſs it: Oh where ſhall wrong'd virtue fly for reparation! I'll be divorced this inſtant.

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud what ſhall I ſay? This is the ſtrangeſt ſurprize! Why I don't know any thing at all, nor I don't know whether there be any thing at all in the world, or no.

L. *P.* I thought I ſhould try you, falſe man. I that never diſſembled in my life: yet to make trial of you, pretended to like that monſter of iniquity, *Careleſs*, and found out that contrivance to let you ſee this letter; which now I find was of your own inditing——I do, heathen, I do, ſee my face no more; I'll be divorced preſently.

Sir *Paul.* O ſtrange, what will become of me!—I'm ſo amaz'd, and ſo overjoy'd, ſo afraid, and ſo ſorry.——But did you give me this letter on purpoſe, he? Did you?

L. *P.* Did I? Do you doubt me, Turk, Saracen? I have a couſin that's a proctor in the commons, I'll go to him inſtantly.——

Sir *Paul.* Hold, ſtay, I beſeech your ladyſhip——I'm ſo overjoy'd, ſtay, I'll confeſs all.

L. *P.* What will you confeſs, Jew?

Sir *Paul.* Why now as I hope to be ſaved, I had no hand in this letter——Nay hear me, I beſeech your ladyſhip: the devil take me now if he did not go beyond my commiſſion——If I deſired him to do any more than ſpeak a good word only juſt for me; gads-bud only for poor Sir *Paul*, I'm an Anabaptiſt, or a Jew, or what you pleaſe to call me.

L. *P.* Why is not here matter of fact?

Sir *Paul.* Ay, but by your own virtue and continency that matter of fact is all his own doing—I confeſs I had a great deſire to have ſome honours conferr'd upon me, which lie all in your ladyſhip's breaſt, and he being a well-ſpoken man, I deſired him to intercede for me.——

L. *P.* Did you ſo, preſumption! Oh! he comes, the *Tarquin* comes; I cannot bear his ſight. [*Exit.*

Enter Careleſs.

Care. Sir *Paul*, I'm glad I've met with you, 'gad I have ſaid all I could, but can't prevail—Then my friendſhip to you has carry'd me a little farther in this matter———

Sir *Paul.* Indeed—Well ſir—I'll diſſemble with him a little. [*Aſide.*

Care. Why faith I have in my time known honeſt gentlemen abuſed by a pretended coyneſs in their wives, and I had a mind to try my lady's virtue—And when I could not prevail for you, 'gad I pretended to be in love myſelf—but all in vain, ſhe would not hear a word upon that ſubject: then I writ a letter to her; I don't know what effects that will have, but I'll be ſure to tell you when I do, tho' by this light I believe her virtue is impregnable.

Sir *Paul.* O Providence! Providence! What diſcoveries are here made? Why, this is better and more miraculous than the reſt.

Care. What do you mean?

Sir *Paul.* I can't tell you, I'm ſo overjoy'd; come along with me to my lady, I can't contain myſelf; come my dear friend.

Care. So, ſo, ſo, this difficulty's over. [*Aſide.*

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Mellefont *and* Maſkwell, *from different doors.*

Mel. Maſkwell! I have been looking for you—'tis within a quarter of eight.

Maſk. My lady is juſt gone into my lord's cloſet, you had beſt ſteal into her chamber before ſhe comes, and lie concealed there, otherwiſe ſhe may lock the door when we are together, and you not eaſily get in to ſurprize us.

Mel. He! You ſay true.

Maſk. You had beſt make haſte, for after ſhe has made ſome apology to the company for her own, and my lord's abſence all this while, ſhe'll retire to her chamber inſtantly.

Mel.

Mel. I go this moment: now fortune I defy thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. I confess you may be allow'd to be secure in your own opinion; the appearance is very fair, but I have an after-game to play that shall turn the tables, and here comes the man that I must manage.

Enter Lord Touchwood.

Ld. *T.* *Maskwell*, you are the man I wish'd to meet.

Mask. I am happy to be in the way of your lordship's commands.

Ld. *T.* I have always found you prudent and careful in any thing that has concern'd me or my family.

Mask. I were a villain else—I am bound by duty and gratitude, and my own inclination, to be ever your lordship's servant.

Ld. *T.* Enough——You are my friend; I know it: yet there has been a thing in your knowledge, which has concern'd me nearly, that you have conceal'd from me.

Mask. My lord!

Ld. *T.* Nay, I excuse your friendship to my unnatural nephew thus far——But I know you have been privy to his impious designs upon my wife. This ev'ning she has told me all: her good-nature conceal'd it as long as was possible; but he perseveres so in villainy, that she has told me even you were weary of dissuading him, 'though you have once actually hindered him from 'forcing her.'

Mask. I am sorry, my lord, I can't make you an answer; this is an occasion in which I would not willingly be silent.

Ld. *T.* I know you would excuse him—And I know as well that you can't.

Mask. Indeed I was in hopes it had been a youthful heat that might have soon boil'd over; but——

Ld. *T.* Say on.

Mask. I have nothing more to say, my lord——but to express my concern; for I think his frenzy increases daily.

Ld. *T.* How! Give me but proof of it, ocular proof,

that I may juſtify my dealing with him to the world, and ſhare my fortunes.

Mask. O my lord! conſider that is hard: beſides, time may work upon him: then, for me to do it! I have profeſs'd an everlaſting friendſhip to him.

Ld. *T.* He is your friend, and what am I?

Mask. I am anſwered.

Ld. *T.* Fear not his diſpleaſure; I will put you out of his, and fortune's power, and for that thou art ſcrupulouſly honeſt, I will ſecure thy fidelity to him, and give my honour never to own any diſcovery that you ſhall make me. Can you give me a demonſtrative proof? ſpeak.

Mask. I wiſh I could not——To be plain, my lord, I intended this ev'ning to have try'd all arguments to diſſuade him from a deſign, which I ſuſpect; and if I had not ſucceeded, to have informed your lordſhip of what I knew.

Ld. *T.* I thank you. What is the villain's purpoſe?

Mask. He has own'd nothing to me of late, and what I mean now, is only a bare ſuſpicion of my own. If your lordſhip will meet me a quarter of an hour hence there, in that lobby by my lady's bed-chamber, I ſhall be able to tell you more.

Ld. *T.* I will.

Mask. My duty to your lordſhip makes me do a ſevere piece of juſtice——

Ld. *T.* I will be ſecret, and reward your honeſty beyond your hopes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *opening, ſhews Lady* Touchwood's *Chamber.*

Meliefont *Solus.*

Pray Heav'n my aunt keep touch with her aſſignation.——Oh that her lord were but ſweating behind this hanging, with the expectation of what I ſhall ſee —Hiſt, ſhe comes—Little does ſhe think what a mine is juſt ready to ſpring under her feet. But to my poſt.

[*Goes behind the hangings.*

Enter Lady Touchwood.

L. *T.* 'Tis eight o'clock: methinks I ſhould have found him here. Who does not prevent the hour of love,

love, out-ſtays the time; for to be duly punctual, is too ſlow.—I was accuſing you of neglect.

Enter Maſkwell.

Mask. I confeſs you do reproach me when I ſee you here before me; but 'tis fit I ſhould be ſtill behind hand, ſtill to be more and more indebted to your goodneſs.

L. *T.* You can excuſe a fault too well, not to have been to blame—A ready anſwer ſhews you were prepar'd.

Mask. Guilt is ever at a loſs, and confuſion waits upon it; when innocence and bold truth are always ready for expreſſion———

L. *T.* Not in love; words are the weak ſupport of cold indifference; love has no language to be heard.

Mask. Exceſs of joy has made me ſtupid? Thus may my lips be ever clos'd. [*Kiſſes her.*] And thus——'Oh 'who would not loſe his ſpeech, upon condition to have 'joys above it?'

L. *T.* Hold, let me lock the door firſt.

[*Goes to the door.*

Mask. [*Aſide.*] That I believ'd; 'twas well I left the private paſſage open.

L. *T.* So, that's ſafe.

Mask. And ſo may all your pleaſures be, and ſecret as this kiſs———

Mel. And may all treachery be thus diſcover'd.

[*Leaps out.*

L. *T.* Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Mel. Villain! [*Offers to draw.*

Mask. Nay then, there's but one way. [*Runs out.*

Mel. Say you ſo, were you provided for an eſcape? Hold madam, you have no more holes for your eſcape; I ſtand between you and this ſally-port.

L. *T.* Shame grief and ruin haunt thee for this deceit, Oh! I could rack myſelf, play the vulture to my own heart, and gnaw it peace meal, for not boding to me this misfortune.

Mel. Be patient.———

L. *T.* Patient!

Mel. Conſider I have you on the hook; you will but

flounder yourſelf a-weary, and be nevertheleſs my priſoner.

L. *T.* I'll hold my breath and die, but I'll be free.

Mel. O madam, have a care of dying unprepar'd, I doubt you have ſome unrepented ſins that may hang heavy, and retard your flight.

L. *T.* O! what ſhall I do? ſay? Whither ſhall I turn? Has hell no remedy?

'*Mel.* None, hell has ſerv'd you ev'n as Heav'n has 'done, left you to yourſelf.--You're in a kind of *Eraſmus*'s 'paradiſe; yet if you pleaſe you may make it a purga-'tory; and with a little penance and my abſolution, 'all this may turn to good account.'

L. *T.* [*Aſide.*] Hold in my paſſion, and fall, fall a little thou ſwelling heart; let me have ſome intermiſſion of this rage, and one minute's coolneſs to diſſemble.

[*She weeps.*

Mel. You have been to blame.——I like thoſe tears, and hope they are of the pureſt kind.—Penitential tears.

L. *T.* O the ſcene was ſhifted quick before me—I had not time to think—I was ſurprized to ſee a monſter in the glaſs, and now I find it is myſelf; can you have mercy to forgive the faults I have imagin'd, but never put in practice——O conſider, conſider how fatal you have been to me, you have already kill'd the quiet of this life. The love of you was the firſt wand'ring fire that e'er miſled my ſteps, and while I had only that in view, I was betray'd into unthought of ways of ruin.

Mel. May I believe this true?

L. *T.* O be not cruelly incredulous——How can you doubt theſe ſtreaming eyes? Keep the ſevereſt eye o'er all my future conduct: and if I once relapſe, let me not hope forgiveneſs, 'twill ever be in your power to ruin me—My lord ſhall ſign to your deſires; I will myſelf create you happineſs, and *Cynthia* ſhall be this night your bride—Do but conceal my failings, and forgive.

Mel. Upon ſuch terms, I will ever be your's in evr'y honeſt way.

Maſkwell *ſoftly introduces Lord* Touchwood, *and retires.*

Mask. I have kept my word, he's here, but I muſt not be ſeen.

Ld. *T.*

Ld. *T.* Hell and amazement, ſhe's in tears.

L. *T.* [*Kneeling.*] Eternal bleſſings thank you—Ha! my lord liſt'ning! O fortune has o'erpaid me all, all! all's my own! [*Aſide.*

Mel. Nay, I beſeech you riſe.

L. *T.* [*Aloud.*] Never, never! I'll grow to the ground, be buried quick beneath it, ere I'll be conſenting to ſo damn'd a ſin as inceſt! unatural inceſt!

Mel. Ha!

L. *T.* O cruel man, will you not let me go—I'll forgive all that's paſt—O Heav'n, you will not raviſh me!

Mel. Confuſion!

Ld. *T.* Monſter, dog! your life ſhall anſwer this——

[*Draws and runs at* Mel. *is held by Lady* Touchwood.

L. *T.* O 'Heav'ns' my Lord! Hold, hold, for mercy's ſake!

Mel. Confuſion, my uncle! O the curs'd ſorcereſs.

L. *T.* Moderate your rage, good my lord! He's mad, alas he's mad—Indeed he is, my Lord, and knows not what he does—See how wild he looks.

Mel. By Heav'n 'twere ſenſeleſs not to be mad, and ſee ſuch witchcraft.

L. *T.* My Lord, you hear him, he talks idly.

Ld. *T.* Hence from my ſight, thou living infamy to my name; when next I ſee that face, I'll write villain in't with my ſword's point.

Mel. Now, by my life, I will not go 'till I have made known my wrongs—Nay, 'till I have made known yours, which (if poſſible) are greater—though ſhe has all the hoſt of hell her ſervants.

L. *T.* Alas he raves! talks very poetry. For Heav'n's ſake, away my Lord, he'll either tempt you to extravagance, or commit ſome himſelf.

Mel. Death and furies, will you not hear me?—Why by Heav'n ſhe laughs, grins, points at you, makes you her mark of inſult and deriſion!

[*As ſhe is going ſhe turns back and ſmiles at him.*

Ld. *T.* I fear he's mad indeed—Let's ſend *Maskwell* to him.

Mel. Send him to her.

L. *T.* Come, come, good my Lord, my heart akes ſo I ſhall faint if I ſtay. [*Exeunt* Lord *and* Lady Touchwood.

Mel. O I could curſe my ſtars, fate, and chance; all cauſes and accidents of fortune in this life! But to what purpoſe? Yet, 'ſdeath for a man to have the fruit of all his induſtry grow full and ripe, ready to drop into his mouth, and juſt when he holds out his hand to gather it to have a ſudden whirlwind come, tear up tree and all, and bear away the very root and foundation of his hopes; What temper can contain? They talk of ſending *Maſkwell* to me; I never had more need of him—But what can he do? Imagination cannot form a fairer and more plauſible deſign than this of his which has miſcarried—O my precious aunt, I ſhall never thrive without I deal with the devil or another woman.

Women like flames, have a deſtroying pow'r,
Ne'er to be quench'd, 'till they themſelves devour. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Enter Lady Touchwood *and* Maſkwell.

L. *T.* WAS'T not lucky?

Mask. Lucky! Fortune is your own, and 'tis her intereſt ſo to be; 'by Heav'n' I believe you can controll her pow'r, and ſhe fears it; though chance brought my lord, 'twas your own art that turn'd it to advantage.

L. *T.* 'Tis true, it might have been my ruin——But yonder's my lord, I believe he's coming to find you, I'll not be ſeen. [*Exit.*

Mask. So; I durſt not own my introducing my lord, though it ſucceeded well for her, for ſhe would have ſuſpected a deſign which I ſhould have been puzzled to excuſe. My lord is thoughtful—I'll be ſo too; yet he ſhall know my thoughts; or think he does———

Enter Lord Touchwood.

Mask. What have I done?

Ld. *T.*

Ld. *T.* Talking to himself!

Mask. 'Twas honeſt—and ſhall I be rewarded for it? No? 'twas honeſt, therefore I ſhan't;—Nay, rather therefore I ought not; for it rewards itſelf.

Ld. *T.* Unequal'd virtue; [*Aſide.*

Mask. But ſhould it be known! then I have loſt a friend! He was an ill man, and I have gain'd; for half myſelf I lent him, and that I have recall'd; ſo I have ſerved myſelf, and what is yet better, I have ſerved a worthy lord to whom I owe myſelf.

Ld. *T.* Excellent man! [*Aſide.*

Mask. Yet I am wretched—O there is a ſecret burns within this breaſt, which ſhould it once blaze forth, would ruin all, conſume my honeſt character, and brand me with the name of villain.

Ld. *T.* Ha!

Mask. Why do I love! Yet Heav'n and my waking conſcience are my witneſſes, I never gave one working thought a vent; which might diſcover that I lov'd, nor ever muſt; no, let it prey upon my heart; for I would rather die, than ſeem once, barely ſeem, diſhoneſt:—O, ſhould it once be known I love fair *Cynthia*, all this that I have done, would look like rival's malice, falſe friendſhip to my lord, and baſe ſelf-intereſt. Let me periſh firſt, and from this hour avoid all ſight and ſpeech, and, if I can, all thought of that pernicious beauty. Ha! but what is my diſtraction doing? I'm wildly talking to myſelf, and ſome ill chance might have directed malicious ears this way. [*Seems to ſtart, ſeeing my Lord.*

Ld. *T.* Start not—let guilty and diſhoneſt ſouls ſtart at the revelation of their thoughts, but be thou fix'd, as is thy virtue.

Mask. I am confounded and beg your lordſhip's pardon for thoſe free diſcourſes which I have had with myſelf.

Ld. *T.* Come, I beg your pardon that I over-heard you, and yet it ſhall not need—Honeſt *Maskwell!* thy and my good genius led me hither——Mine, in that I have diſcover'd ſo much manly virtue; thine, in that thou ſhalt have due reward of all thy worth. Give me thy hand—my nephew

nephew is the alone remaining branch of all our ancient family; him I thus blow away, and conſtitute thee in his room to be my heir———

Mask. Now fate forbid———

Ld. *T.* No more—I have reſolv'd—The writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be ſign'd, and have his name inſerted—Your's will fill the blank as well ——I will have no reply—Let me command this time; for 'tis the laſt, in which I will aſſume authority—— hereafter, you ſhall rule where I have power.

Mask. I humbly would petition.—

Ld. *T.* Is't for yourſelf?—[Maſk. *pauſes.*] I'll hear of nought for any body elſe.

Mask. Then, witneſs Heav'n, for me, this wealth and honour was not of my ſeeking, nor would I build my fortune on another's ruin: I had but one deſire ——

Ld. *T.* Thou ſhalt enjoy it———If all I'm worth in wealth or intereſt can purchaſe *Cynthia*, ſhe is thine—— I'm ſure Sir *Paul*'s conſent will follow fortune; I'll quickly ſhew him which way that is going.

Mask. You oppreſs me with bounty; my gratitude is weak, and ſhrinks beneath the weight, and cannot riſe to thank you—What, enjoy my love! forgive the tranſports of a bleſſing ſo unexpected, ſo unhop'd for, ſo unthought of!

Ld. *T.* I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee.

[*Exit.*

Mask. This is proſp'rous indeed—Why let him find me out a villain, ſettled in poſſeſſion of a fair eſtate, and full fruition of my love, I'll bear the railings of a loſing gameſter———But ſhou'd he find me out before! 'tis dangerous to delay———Let me think———— ſhou'd my lord proceed to treat openly of my marriage with *Cynthia*, all muſt be diſcover'd, and *Mellefont* can be no longer blinded.———It muſt not be; nay, ſhou'd my lady know it———ay, then were fine work indeed! Her fury wou'd ſpare nothing, tho' ſhe involv'd herſelf in ruin. No, it muſt be by ſtratagem———I muſt deceive *Mellefont* once more, and get my lord to conſent to my private management. He comes opportunely———Now will I, in my old way, diſcover the whole

whole and real truth of the matter to him, that he may not ſuſpect one word on't.

No Maſk like open truth to cover lies,
As to go naked is the beſt diſguiſe.

Enter Mellefont.

Mel. O *Maſkwell*, what hopes? I am confounded in a maze of thoughts, each leading into another, and all ending in perplexity. My uncle will not hear nor ſee me.

Maſk. No matter, ſir, don't trouble your head, all's in my power.

Mel. How? For Heav'n's ſake?

Maſk. Little do you think that your aunt has kept her word.—How the devil ſhe wrought my lord into this dotage, I know not; but he's gone to Sir *Paul* about my marriage with *Cynthia*, and has appointed me his heir.

Mel. The devil he has! What's to be done?

Maſk. I have it, it muſt be by ſtratagem; for it's in vain to make application to him. I think I have that in my head that cannot fail: Where's *Cynthia?*

Mel. In the garden.

Maſk. Let us go and conſult her, my life for your's, I cheat my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord *and Lady* Touchwood.

L. *T. Maſkwell* your heir, and marry *Cynthia!*

Ld. *T.* I cannot do too much for ſo much merit.

L. *T.* But this is a thing of too great moment to be ſo ſuddenly reſolv'd. Why *Cynthia?* Why muſt he be marry'd? Is there not reward enough in raiſing his low fortune, but he muſt mix his blood with mine, and wed my niece? How know you that my brother will conſent, or ſhe? Nay, he himſelf perhaps may have ſome affections otherwhere.

Ld. *T.* No, I am convinc'd he loves her.

L. *T. Maſkwell*, love *Cynthia*, impoſſible!

Ld. *T.* I tell you, he confeſs'd it to me.

L. *T.* Confuſion! how's this! [*Aſide.*

Ld. *T.* His humility long ſtifled his paſſion: and his love of *Mellefont* would have made him ſtill conceal it,—But by encouragement, I wrung the ſecret from him; and know he's no way to be rewarded but with her. I'll defer my farther proceedings in it, 'till you have conſider'd it; but remember how we are both indebted to him.

[*Exit.*

L. *T.*

L. *T.* Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all; villain! Oh, I am wild with this surprize of treachery: It is impossible, it cannot be.—He love *Cynthia!* What have I been assisting to his designs, his property only, 'a baiting place!' Now I see what made him false to *Mellefont*,—— —Shame and distraction! I cannot bear it: 'oh! what woman can bear 'to be a property? To be kindled to a flame, only to 'light him to another's arms; oh! that I were fire in-'deed, that I might burn the vile traitor.' What shall I do? How shall I think? I cannot think,———— All my designs are lost, my love unsated, my revenge unfinish'd, and fresh cause of fury from unthought of plagues.

Enter Sir Paul Plyant.

Sir *Paul.* Madam, sister, my lady sister, did you see my lady my wife!

L. *T.* O Torture!

Sir *Paul.* Gads-bud, I can't find her high nor low; where can she be, think you?

L. *T.* Where she's serving you, as all your sex ought to be serv'd; making you a beast. Don't you know that you're a fool, brother?

Sir *Paul.* A fool; he, he, he! you're merry—No, no, not I, I know no such matter.

L. *T.* Why then you don't know half your happiness.

Sir *Paul* That's a jest with all my heart, faith and troth.——But hark'ye, my lord told me something of a revolution of things; I don't know what to make on't ———Gads-bud, I must consult my wife,——he talks of disinheriting his nephew; and I don't know what,—look you, sister, I must know what my girl has to trust to; or not a syllable of a wedding, gads-bud—'to shew 'you that I am not a fool.'

L. *T.* Hear me; consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, without consulting me, and I'll renounce all blood, all relation and concern with you for ever,——nay, I'll be you enemy, and pursue you to destruction, I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet.————

Sir *Paul*

Sir *Paul.* Why, what's the matter now? Good Lord, what's all this for? Pooh, here's a joke indeed—Why, where's my wife?

L. *T.* With *Careleſs*, fool! moſt likely.

Sir *Paul.* O, if the be with Mr. *Careleſs*, 'tis well enough.

L. *T.* Fool, ſot, inſenſible ox! but remember what I ſaid to you, or you had better ſee my face no more; by this light you had.

Sir *Paul.* You're a paſſionate woman, gads-bud,—— But to ſay truth, all our family are cholerick; I am the only peaceable perſon amongſt 'em. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mellefont, Maſkwell *and* Cynthia.

Mel. I know no other way but this he has propos'd; if you have love enough to run the venture.

Cynt. I don't know whether I have love enough—but I find I have obſtinacy enough to purſue whatever I have once reſolv'd; and a true female courage to oppoſe any thing that reſiſts my will, tho' 'twere reaſon itſelf.

Mask. That's right,——Well, I'll ſecure the writings, and run the hazard along with you.

Cynt. But how can the coach and ſix horſes be got ready without ſuſpicion?

Mask. Leave it to my care; that ſhall be ſo far from being ſuſpected, that it ſhall be got ready by my lord's own order.

Mel. How?

Mask. Why, I intend to tell my lord the whole matter of our contrivance, that's my way.

Mel. I don't underſtand you.

Mask. Why, I'll tell my lord, I laid this plot with you, on purpoſe to betray you; and that which put me upon it, was, the finding it impoſſible to gain the lady any other way, but in the hopes of her marrying you.—

Mel. So ——

Mask. So, why ſo, while you're buſied in making yourſelf ready, I'll wheedle her into the coach; and inſtead of you, borrow my lord's chaplain, and ſo run away with her myſelf.

Mel. Oh! I conceive you, you'll tell him ſo?

Mask.

Mask. Tell him so! ay, why you don't think I mean to do so?

Mel. No, no! ha, ha! I dare swear thou wilt not.

Mask. Therefore for our farther security, I would have you disguis'd like a parson, that if my lord should have curiosity to peep, he may not discover you in the coach, but think the cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Mel. Excellent *Maskwell!* thou wert certainly meant for a statesman or a Jesuit,——but thou art too honest for one, and too pious for the other.

Mask. Well, get yourselves ready, and meet me in half an hour, yonder in my lady's dressing-room; 'go by the back stairs, and so we may slip down without being observ'd.'—I'll send the chaplain to you with his robes; I have made him my own,——and ordered him to meet us to-morrow morning at St. *Albans*; there we will sum up this account, to all our satisfactions.

Mel. Should I begin to thank or praise thee, I should waste the little time we have. [*Exit.*

Mask. Madam, you will be ready?

Cynt. I will be punctual to the minute. [*Going.*

Mask. Stay, I have a doubt—Upon second thoughts, we had better meet in the chaplain's chamber here, the corner chamber at this end of the gallery, there is a back way into it, so that you need not come through this door——and a pair of private stairs leading down to the stables——It will be more convenient.

Cynt. I am guided by you,—but *Mellefont* will mistake.

Mask. No, no, I'll after him immediately, and tell him.

Cynt. I will not fail. [*Exit.*

Mask. Why, *qui vult decipi, decipiatur.*—'Tis no fault of mine, I have told 'em in plain terms, how easy 'tis for me to cheat 'em; and if they will not hear the serpent's hiss, they must be stung into experience, and future caution.——Now to prepare my lord to consent to this.——But first I must instruct my little Levite; there is no plot, publick or private, that can expect to prosper without one of them has a finger in't, he promised me to be within at this hour,——Mr. *Saygrace*, Mr. *Saygrace.* [*Goes to the chamber door, and knocks.*

Saygr.

Sayg. [*looking out.*] Sweet ſir, I will but pen the laſt line of an acroſtick, and be with you in the twinkling of an ejaculation, in the pronouncing of an *Amen*, or before you can ———

Mask. Nay, good Mr. *Saygrace*, do not prolong the time, by deſcribing to me the ſhortneſs of your ſtay; rather if you pleaſe, defer the finiſhing of your wit, and let us talk about our buſineſs, it ſhall be tithes in your way.

Sayg. [*Enters*] You ſhall prevail, I would break off in the middle of a ſermon to do you a pleaſure.

Mask. You could not do me a greater,—except—— the buſineſs in hand———Have you provided a habit for *Mellefont?*

Sayg. I have, they are ready in my chamber, together with a clean ſtarch'd band and cuffs.

Mask. Good, let them be carry'd to him,——have you ſtitch'd the gown ſleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waſte time in putting it on?

Sayg. I have; the gown will not be indued without perplexity.

Mask. Meet me in half an hour, here in your own chamber. When *Cynthia* comes, let there be no light, and do not ſpeak, that ſhe may not diſtinguiſh you from *Mellefont*. I'll urge haſte, to excuſe your ſilence.

Sayg. You have no more commands?

Mask. None, your text is ſhort.

Sayg. But pithy, and I will handle it with diſcretion.

Mask. It will be the firſt you have ſo ſerv'd.

[*Exit* Saygrace.

Enter Lord Touchwood.

Ld. *T.* Sure I was born to be controlled by thoſe I ſhould command: My very ſlaves will ſhortly give me rules how I ſhall govern them.

Mask. I am concern'd to ſee your lordſhip diſcompos'd ———

Ld. *T.* Have you ſeen my wife lately, or diſoblig'd her?

Mask. No my lord. What can this mean! [*Aſide.*

Ld. *T.* Then *Mellefont* has urg'd ſome body to incenſe her

her—Something she has heard of you which carries her beyond the bounds of patience.

Mask. This I fear'd. [*Aside.*] Did not your lordship tell her of the honours you design'd me?

Ld. *T.* Yes.

Mask. 'Tis that; you know my lady has a high spirit, she thinks I am unworthy.

Ld. *T.* Unworthy! 'Tis an ignorant pride in her to think so———Honesty to me is true nobility. However, 'tis my will it shall be so, and that shou'd be convincing to her as much as reason———By Heav'n, I'll not be wife-ridden; were it possible, it should be done this night.

Mask. By Heav'n he meets my wishes. [*Aside.*] Few things are impossible to willing minds.

Ld. *T.* Instruct me how this may be done, you shall see I want no inclination.

Mask. I had laid a small design for to-morrow (as love will be inventing) which I thought to communicate to your lordship———But it may be as well done to-night.

Ld. *T.* Here's company——Come this way, and tell me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Careless *and* Cynthia.

Care. Is not that he, now gone out with my lord?

Cynt. Yes.

Care. By Heav'n there's treachery——The confusion that I saw your father in, my Lady *Touchwood's* passion, with what imperfectly I over-heard between my lord and her, confirm me in my fears. Where's *Mellefont*?

Cynt. Here he comes.

Enter Mellefont.

Did *Maskwell* tell you any thing of the chaplain's chamber?

Mel. No; my dear, will you get ready——the things are all in my chamber; I want nothing but the habit.

Care. You are betray'd, and *Maskwell* is the villain I always thought him.

Cynt. When you were gone, he said his mind was chang'd, and bid me meet him in the chaplain's room, pretending

pretending immediately to follow you, and give you notice.

Mel. How!

Care. There's *Saygrace* tripping by with a bundle under his arm——He cannot be ignorant that *Maskwell* means to uſe his chamber; let's follow and examine him.

Mel. 'Tis loſs of time——I cannot think him falſe.

[*Exit* Mellefont.

Enter Lord Touchwood.

Cynt. My lord muſing!

Ld. *T.* He has a quick invention, if this were ſuddenly deſign'd——Yet he ſays he had prepar'd my chaplain already.

Cynt. How's this! Now I fear indeed.

Ld. *T.* *Cynthia* here! Alone, fair couſin, and melancholy?

Cynt. Your lordſhip was thoughtful.

Ld. *T.* My thoughts were on ſerious buſineſs, not worth your hearing.

Cynt. Mine were on treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Ld. *T.* Treachery concerning me! pray be plain——Hark! What noiſe!

Mask. [*Within.*] Will you not hear me?

L. *T.* [*Within.*] No, monſter! Traitor! No.

Cynt. My lady and *Maskwell!* this may be lucky——My lord, let me intreat you to ſtand behind this ſkreen, and liſten; perhaps this chance may give you proof of what you ne'er could have believ'd from my ſuſpicions.

Enter Lady Touchwood *with a dagger, and* Maſkwell: Cynthia *and Lord* Touchwood *liſtening.*

L. *T.* You want but leiſure to invent freſh falſhood, and ſooth me to a fond belief of all your fictions; but I will ſtab the lye that's forming in your heart, and ſave a ſin, in pity to your ſoul.

Mask. Strike then——Since you will have it ſo.

L. *T.* Ha! A ſteady villain to the laſt!

Mask. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

L. *T.* Thy ſtubborn temper ſhocks me, and you knew it would——this is cunning all, and not courage; no I know the well: but thou ſhalt miſs thy aim.

Maſk.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha!

L. *T.* Ha! do you mock my rage? Then this shall punish your fond, rash contempt! Again smile!

[*Goes to strike.*

And such a smile as speaks in ambiguity!
Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face.
O! that they were written in thy heart,
That I, with this, might lay thee open to my sight!
But then 'twill be too late to know———
Thou hast, thou hast found the only way to turn my Rage; too well thou know'st my jealous soul cou'd never bear uncertainty. Speak then, and tell me—Yet are you silent? Oh, I am wilder'd in all passions! but thus my anger melts. [*Weeps.*] Here, take this poniard, for my very spirits faint, and I want strength to hold it, thou hast disarm'd my soul. [*Gives the dagger.*

Ld. *T.* Amazement shakes me.—Where will this end?'

Mask. So,' tis well——let your wild fury have a vent? and when you have temper, tell me.

L. *T.* Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Mask. [*Aside.*] Thanks, my invention; and now I have it for you.——First tell me what urg'd you to this violence? For your passion broke in such imperfect terms, that yet I am to learn the cause.

L. *T.* My Lord himself surpriz'd me with the news, you were to marry *Cynthia*——That you had own'd your love to him, and his indulgence would assist you to attain your ends.

'*Cynt.* How, my lord!

'Ld. *T.* Pray forbear all resentments for a while, and 'let us hear the rest.'

Mask. I grant you in appearance all is true; I seem'd consenting to my lord; nay, transported with the blessing——But could you think that I, who had been happy in your lov'd embraces, could e'er be fond of an inferior slavery?

Ld. *T.* 'Ha!' O poison to my ears! what do I hear!

Cynt. Nay, good my lord, forbear resentment, let us hear it out.

Ld. *T.*

Ld. *T.* Yes, I will contain, tho' I cou'd burſt.

Mask. 'I that had wanton'd in the rich circle of your 'world of love, cou'd be confin'd within the puny pro-'vince of a girl?' No——Yet tho' I dote on each laſt favour more than all the reſt; though I would give a limb for every look you cheaply throw away on any other object of your love; yet ſo far I prize your pleaſures o'er my own, that all this ſeeming plot that I have laid, has been to gratify your taſte, and cheat the world, to prove a faithful rogue to you.

L. *T.* If this were true——But how can it be?

Mask. I have ſo contriv'd, that *Mellefont* will preſently in the chaplain's habit, wait for *Cynthia* in your dreſſing-room: But I have put the change upon her, that ſhe may be otherwhere employ'd—Do you go with your cloak over your face, meet him in her ſtead; you may go privately by the back ſtairs, and, unperceiv'd, there you may propoſe to reinſtate him in his uncle's favour, if he'll comply with your deſires; his caſe is deſperate, and I believe he'll yield to any conditions.—If not, here take this; you may employ it better, than in the heart of one who is nothing when not your's. [*Gives the dagger.*

L. *T.* Thou can'ſt deceive every body,——Nay, thou haſt deceiv'd me; but 'tis as I would wiſh,——Truſty villain! I could worſhip thee——

Mask. No more.—It wants but a few minutes of the time; and *Mellefont*'s love will carry him there before his hour.

L. *T.* I go, I fly, incomparable *Maskwell!* [*Exit.*

Mask. So, this was a pinch indeed, my invention was upon the rack; and made diſcovery of her laſt plot: I hope *Cynthia* and my chaplain will be ready, I'll prepare for the expedition. [*Exit.*

Cynthia *and Lord* Touchwood *come forward.*

Cynt. Now, my lord?

Ld. *T.* Aſtoniſhment binds up my rage! villainy upon villainy! Heav'ns, what a long track of dark deceit has this diſcover'd! I am confounded when I look back, and want a clue to guide me through the various mazes of unheard of treachery, My wife! O torture! My ſhame! My ruin! *Cynt.*

Cynt. My lord, have patience, and be ſenſible how great our happineſs is, that this diſcovery was not made too late.

Ld. *T.* I thank you, yet it may be ſtill too late, if we don't preſently prevent the execution of their plots;—Ha, I'll do't. Where's *Mellefont*, my poor injur'd nephew,——How ſhall I make him ample ſatisfaction?——

Cynt. I dare anſwer for him.

Ld. *T.* I do him freſh wrong to queſtion his forgiveneſs; for I know him to be all goodneſs,——Yet my wife! 'damn her,'—She'll think to meet him in that dreſſing-room;—Was't not ſo? And *Maskwell* will expect you in the chaplain's chamber.—For once, I'll add my plot too.—Let us haſte to find out, and inform my nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the company into this gallery.—I'll expoſe the ſtrumpet, and the villain. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord Froth *and Sir* Paul Plyant.

Ld. *Froth.* By Heav'ns I have ſlept an age——Sir *Paul,* what a clock is't? Faſt eight, on my conſcience, my lady's is the moſt inviting couch; and a ſlumber there, is the prettieſt amuſement! but where's all the company?——

Sir *Paul.* The company, gads-bud, I don't know, my lord, but here's the ſtrangeſt revolution, all turn'd topſy turvy; as I hope for tranquility.

Ld. *Froth.* O Heav'ns, what's the matter? Where's my wife?

Sir *Paul.* All turn'd topſy turvy as ſure as a gun.

Ld. *Froth.* How do you mean! my wife!

Sir *Paul.* The ſtrangeſt poſture of affairs!

Ld. *Froth.* What, my wife?

Sir *Paul.* No, no, I mean the family,—Your lady's affairs may be in a very good poſture; I ſaw her go into the garden with Mr. *Brisk.*

Ld. *Froth.* How? where, when, what to do?

Sir *Paul.* I ſuppoſe they have been laying their heads together.

Ld. *Froth.* How?

Sir *Paul.* Nay, only about poetry, I ſuppoſe, my lord; making couplets.

Ld.

Ld. *Froth.* Couplets.

Sir *Paul.* Oh, here they come.

Enter Lady Froth *and* Briſk.

Briſk. My lord, your humble ſervant; Sir *Paul* yours ——the fineſt night!

L. *Froth.* My dear, Mr. *Briſk* and I have been ſtargazing, I don't know how long.

Sir *Paul.* Does it not tire your ladyſhip? are not you weary with looking up?

L. *Froth.* Oh, no, I love it violently,——My dear, you're melancholy.

Ld. *Froth.* No, my dear; I'm but juſt awake.——

L. *Froth.* Snuff ſome of my ſpirit of hartſhorn.

Ld. *Froth.* I've ſome of my own, thank you, my dear.

L. *Froth.* Well, I ſwear, Mr. *Briſk,* you underſtood aſtronomy like an old *Egyptian.*

Briſk. Not comparably to your ladyſhip; you are the very *Cynthia* of the ſkies, and queen of ſtars.

L. *Froth.* That's becauſe I have no light, but what's by reflection from you, who are the ſun.

Briſk. Madam, you have eclips'd me quite, let me periſh,—I can't anſwer that.

L. *Froth.* No matter,——Hark'ee, ſhall you and I make an almanack together.

Briſk. With all my ſoul.—Your ladyſhip has made me the man in't already, I'm ſo full of the wounds which you have given.

L. *Froth.* O finely taken! I ſwear now you are even with me, O *Parnaſſus,* you have an infinite deal of wit.

Sir *Paul.* So he has, gads-bud, and ſo has your ladyſhip.

Enter Lady Plyant, Careleſs *and* Cynthia.

L. *P.* You tell me moſt ſurprizing things; bleſs me, who would ever truſt a man? O my heart akes for fear they ſhould be all deceitful alike.

Care. You need not fear, madam, you have charms to fix inconſtancy itſelf.

L. *P.* O dear, you make me bluſh.

Ld. *Froth.* Come, my dear, ſhall we take leave of my lord and lady?

Cynt.

Cynt. They'll wait upon your lordſhip preſently.

L. *Froth.* Mr. *Briſk*, my coach ſhall ſet you down.

All. What's the matter?

[*A great ſhriek from the corner of the ſtage.*

Lady Touchwood *runs out affrighted, my Lord after her, like a Parſon.*

L. *T.* O I'm betray'd.—Save me, help me.

Ld. *T.* Now what evaſion, wretch!

L. *T.* Stand off, let me go. [*Exit.*

Ld. *T.* Go, and thy own infamy purſue thee.—You ſtare as you were all amazed,—I don't wonder at it,—but too ſoon you'll know mine, and that woman's ſhame.

Enter Mellefont *diſguiſed in a Parſon's Habit and pulling in* Maſkwell.

Mel. Nay, by Heav'n you ſhall be ſeen.——*Careleſs*, your hand;—Do you hold down your head? Yes I am your chaplain, look in the face of your injur'd friend; thou wonder of all falſhood.

Ld. *T.* Are you ſilent, monſter?

Mel. Good Heav'ns! How I believ'd and lov'd this man!—Take him hence, for he's a diſeaſe to my ſight.

Ld. *T.* Secure that manifold villain.

[*Servants ſeize him.*

Care. Miracle of ingratitude?

"Sir *Paul. O Providence! Providence! what diſcove-*
"*ries are here.*"

Briſk. This is all very ſurprizing, let me periſh.

L. *Froth.* You know I told you Saturn look'd a little more angry than uſual.

Ld. *T.* We'll think of puniſhment at leiſure, but let me haſten to do juſtice, in rewarding virtue and wrong'd innocence.—Nephew, I hope I have your pardon, and *Cynthia*'s.

Mel. We are your lordſhip's creatures.

Ld. *T.* And be each others comfort;—Let me join your hands.—Uninterrupted bliſs attend you both; mutual love, laſting health, and circling joys, tread round each happy year of your long lives.

Let

Let ſecret villainy from hence be warn'd;
Howe'er in private miſchiefs are conceiv'd,
Torture and ſhame attend their open birth;
Like vipers in the breaſt, baſe treachery lies,
Still gnawing that, whence firſt it did ariſe;
No ſooner born, but the vile parent dies.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

COU'D poets but foresee how plays would take,
Then they cou'd tell what epilogues to make;
Whether to thank or blame their audience most:
But that late knowledge does much hazard cost,
'Till dice are thrown, there's nothing won, nor lost.
So 'till the thief has stol'n, he cannot know
Whether he shall escape the law, or no.
But poets run much greater hazards far,
Than they who stand their trials at the bar;
The law provides a curb for its own fury,
And suffers judges to direct the jury.
But in this court, what diff'rence does appear!
For every one's both judge and jury here;
Nay, and what's worse, an executioner.
All have a right and title to some part,
Each choosing that in which he has most art.
The dreadful men of learning all confound,
Unless the fable's good, and moral sound.
The vizor-masks, that are in pit and gallery,
Approve, or damn the repartee and rallery.
The lady criticks, who are better read,
Inquire if characters are nicely bred;
If the soft things are penn'd and spoke with grace:
They judge of action too, and time, and place;
In which we do not doubt but they're discerning,
For that's a kind of assignation learning.
Beaux judge of dress; the witlings judge of songs;
The cuckoldom, of ancient right, to cits belongs.

Thus

EPILOGUE.

Thus poor poets, the favour are deny'd,
Even to make exceptions, when they're try'd.
'Tis hard that they muſt ev'ry one admit:
Methinks I ſee ſome faces in the pit,
Which muſt of conſequence be foes to wit.
You who can judge, to ſentence may proceed;
But tho' he cannot write, let him be freed
At leaſt from their contempt, who cannot read.

FINIS.

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THE

DOUBLE GALLANT:

OR, THE

SICK LADY'S CURE.

A

COMEDY.

WRITTEN BY

COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

Marked with the Variations of the

MANAGER's BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

LONDON:

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M.DCC.LXXVII.

☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatre are here preserved, and marked with single inverted Commas; as at Lines 18 and 19, in Page 13.

PROLOGUE.

COU'D thoſe, who never try'd, conceive the ſweat,
The toil requir'd, to make a play complete;
They'd pardon, or encourage all that cou'd
Pretend to be but tolerably good.
Plot, wit, and humour's hard to meet in one,
And yet without 'em all—all's lamely done:
One wit, perhaps, another humour paints;
A third deſigns you well, but genius wants;
A fourth begins with fire——but, ah! too weak to hold it, faints.
A modern bard, who late adorn'd the bays,
Whoſe Muſe advanc'd his fame to envy'd praiſe,
Was ſtill obſerv'd to want his judgment moſt in plays.
Thoſe, he too often found, requir'd the pain,
And ſtronger forces of a vig'rous brain:
Nay, even alter'd plays, like old houſes mended,
Coſt little leſs than new, before they're ended;
At leaſt, our author finds the experience true,
For equal pains had made this wholly new:
And though the name ſeems old, the ſcenes will ſhow
That 'tis, in fact, no more the ſame, than now.
Fam'd Chatſworth is, what 'twas ſome years ago.
Pardon the boldneſs, that a play ſhould dare,
With works of ſo much wonder to compare:
But as that fabrick's ancient walls or wood
Were little worth, to make this new one good;
So of this play, we hope, 'tis underſtood.
For though from former ſcenes ſome hints he draws,
The ground-plot's wholly chang'd from what it was:
Not but he hopes you'll find enough that's new,
In plot, in perſons, wit and humour too:
Yet what's not his, he owns in others right,
Nor toils he now for fame, but your delight.
If that's attain'd, what matter's whoſe the play's?
Applaud the ſcenes, and ſtrip him of the praiſe.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

	At Drury Lane.
Sir Solomon Sadlife,	
Clerimont,	Mr. PARSONS.
Careleſs,	Mr. PACKER.
Atall,	Mr. JEFFERSON.
Old Mr. Wilfull,	Mr. KING.
Sir Harry Atall,	Mr. BADDELEY.
Supple,	Mr. HURST.
Dr. Bliſter,	Mr. BURTON.
Rhubarb,	Mr. KEEN.
Finder,	Mr. WRIGHTEN.
	Mr. WRIGHT.

WOMEN.

Lady Dainty,	
Lady Sadlife,	Miſs YOUNG.
Clarinda,	Mrs. ABINGTON.
Sylvia,	Mrs. GREVILLE.
Wiſhwell,	Mrs. BADDELEY.
Situp,	Mrs. DAVIES.
	Mrs. BRADSHAW.

THE DOUBLE GALLANT: OR, THE SICK LADY'S CURE.

ACT I. SCENE I. *The park.*

Enter Clerimont *and* Atall.

Cler. MR. *Atall*, your very humble ſervant.

At. O Clerimont, ſuch an adventure! I was juſt going to your lodgings, ſuch a tranſporting accident! in ſhort, I am now poſitively in love for altogether.

Cler. All the ſex together, I believe.

At. Nay if thou doſt not believe me, and ſtand my friend, I am ruin'd paſt redemption.

Cler. Dear ſir, if I ſtand your friend without believing you, won't that do as well? But why ſhou'd you think I don't believe you? I have ſeen you twice in love within this fortnight; and it wou'd be hard indeed to ſuppoſe a heart of ſo much mettle could not hold out a third engagement.

At. Then, to be ſerious, in one word, I am honourably in love; and, if ſhe proves the woman I am ſure ſhe muſt, will poſitively marry her.

Cler. Marry! O degenerate virtue!

At. Now will you help me?

Cler. Sir, you may depend upon me:—Pray give me leave firſt to aſk a queſtion or two: What is this honourable lady's name?

At. Faith, I don't know.

Cler. What are her parents?

At. I can't tell.

Cler. What fortune has she?

At. I don't know.

Cler. Where does she live?

At. I can't tell.

Cler. A very concise account of the person you design to marry. Pray, sir, what is't you do know of her?

At. That I'll tell you: Coming yesterday from Greenwich by water, I overtook a pair of oars, whose lovely freight was one single lady, and a fellow in a handsome livery in the stern. When I came up, I had at first resolv'd to use the privilege of the element, and bait her with waterman's wit, till I came to the bridge; but, as soon as she saw me, she very prudently prevented my design; and, as I pass'd, bow'd to me with an humble blush, that spoke at once such sense, so just a fear, and modesty, as put the looseſt of my thoughts to rout. And when she found her fears had mov'd me into manners, the cautious gloom that sat upon her beauties disappear'd; her sparkling eyes resum'd their native fire; she look'd, she smil'd, she talk'd, while her diffusive charms new fir'd my heart, and gave my soul a softness it never felt before—To be brief, her conversation was as charming as her person, both easy, unconstrain'd, and sprightly: But then her limbs! O rapturous thought! The snowy down upon the wings of unfledg'd love, had never half that softness.

Cler. Raptures indeed. Pray, sir, how came you so well acquainted with her limbs?

At. By the most fortunate misfortune sure that ever was: For, as we were shooting the bridge, her boat, by the negligence of the waterman, running against the piles, was overset; out jumps the footman to take care of a single rogue, and down went the poor lady to the bottom. My boat being before her, the stream drove her, by the help of her cloaths, towards me; at sight of her I plung'd in, caught her in my arms, and, with much a do, supported her till my waterman pull'd in to save us. But the charming difficulty of her getting into the boat, gave me a transport that all the wide water in the Thames had not power to cool; for, sir, while I was

giving

giving her a lift into the boat, I found the floating of her cloaths had left her lovely limbs beneath as bare as new-born Venus rising from the sea.

Cler. What an impudent happiness art thou capable of!

At. When she was a little recover'd from her fright she began to enquire my name, abode, and circumstances, that she might know to whom she ow'd her life and preservation. Now, to tell you the truth, I durst not trust her with my real name, lest she should from thence have discover'd that my father was now actually under bonds to marry me to another woman; so faith I ev'n told her my name was Freeman, a Glouceſterſhire gentleman, of a good estate, just come to town about a chancery suit. Besides, I was unwilling any accident should let my father know of my being yet in England, lest he should find me out, and force me to marry the woman I never saw (for which, you know, he commanded me home) before I have time to prevent it.

Cler. Well, but cou'd not you learn the lady's name all this while?

At. No faith, she was inexorable to all intreaties; only told me in general terms, that if what I vow'd to her was sincere, she wou'd give me a proof in a few days what hazards she would run to requite my services; so after having told her where she might hear of me, I saw her into a chair, press'd her by the cold rosy fingers, kiss'd 'em warm, and parted.

Cler. What! Then you are quite off of the lady, I suppose, that you made an acquaintance with in the park last week.

At. No, no; not so neither: One's my Juno, all pride and beauty; but this my Venus, all life, love, and softness. Now, what I beg of thee, dear Clerimont, is this: Mrs. Juno, as I told you, having done me the honour of a civil visit or two at my own lodgings, I must needs borrow thine to entertain Mrs. Venus in; for if the rival goddesses should meet and clash, you know there wou'd be the devil to do between them.

Cler. Well, sir, my lodgings are at your service: But you must be very private and sober, I can tell you; for my landlady's a presbyterian; if she suspects your design, you're blown up, depend upon't.

At. Don't fear, I'll be as careful as a guilty conſcience: But I want immediate poſſeſſion; for I expect to hear from her every moment, and have already directed her to ſend thither. Pr'ythee come with me.

Cler. 'Faith you muſt excuſe me; I expect ſome ladies in the park that I wou'd not miſs of for an empire: But yonder's my ſervant, he ſhall conduct you.

At. Very good! that will do as well then; I'll ſend my man along with him to expect her commands, and call me if ſhe ſends: And in the mean time I'll e'en go home to my own lodgings; for, to tell you the truth, I expect a ſmall meſſage there from my goddeſs imperial. And I am not ſo much in love with my new bird in the buſh, as to let t'other fly out of my hand for her.

Cler. And pray, ſir, what name does your goddeſs imperial, as you call her, know you by?

At. O, ſir, with her I paſs for a man of arms, and am call'd Col. Standfaſt; with my new face, John Freeman, of Flatland-Hall, eſq. But time flies; I muſt leave you.

Cler. Well, dear Atall, I'm yours——Good luck to you. [*Exit* At.] What a happy fellow is this, that owes his ſucceſs with the women purely to his inconſtancy? Here comes another too almoſt as happy as he, a fellow that's wiſe enough to be but half in love, and make his whole life a ſtudied idleneſs.

Enter Careleſs.

So, Careleſs! you're conſtant, I ſee, to your morning's ſaunter. Well! how ſtand matters? I hear ſtrange things of thee; that after having rail'd at marriage all thy life, thou haſt reſolv'd to fall into the nooſe at laſt.

Care. I don't ſee any great terror in the nooſe, as you call it, when a man's weary of liberty: The liberty of playing the fool, when one's turn'd of thirty, is not of much value.

Cler. Hey-day! Then you begin to have nothing in your head now, but ſettlements, children, and the main chance?

Care. Ev'n ſo faith; but in hopes to come at 'em too, I am forc'd very often to make my way through pills, elixirs, bolus's, ptizans, and gallipots.

Cler.

Cler. What, is your mistress an apothecary's widow?

Care. No, but she is an apothecary's shop, and keeps as many drugs in her bed-chamber; she has her physic for every hour of the day and night——for 'tis vulgar, she says, to be a moment in rude and perfect health. Her bed lin'd with poppies; the black boys at the feet, that the healthy employ to bear flowers in their arms, she loads with diascordium, and other sleepy potions; her sweet-bags, instead of the common and offensive smells of musk and amber, breathe nothing but the more modish and salubrious scents of hart's-horn, rue, and assafœtida.

Cler. Why, at this rate, she's only fit to be the consort of Hippocrates. But pray what other charms has this extraordinary lady?

Care. She has one, Tom, that a man may relish without being so deep a physician.

Cler. What's that?

Care. Why, two thousand pounds a year.

Cler. No vulgar beauty, I confess, sir; but can'st thou for any consideration throw thyself into this hospital, this box of physic, and lie all night like leaf-gold upon a pill?

Care. O, dear sir, this is not half the evil; her humour is as fantastic as her diet; nothing that is English must come near her; all her delight is in foreign impertinencies: Her rooms are all of Japan or Persia, her dress Indian, and her equipage are all monsters: The coachman came over with his horses, both from Russia, Flanders are too common; the rest of her trim are a motly crowd of blacks, tawny, olives, feulamots, and pale blues: In short, she's for any thing that comes from beyond sea; her greatest monsters are those of her own country; and she's in love with nothing o'this side the line, but the apothecaries.

Cler. Apothecaries quotha! why your fine lady, for aught I see, is a perfect dose of folly and physic; in a month's time she'll grow like an antimonial cup, and a kiss will be able to work with you.

Care. But to prevent that, Tom, I design upon the wedding-day to break all her gallipots, kick the doctor down stairs, and force her, instead of physic, to take a

hearty meal of a ſwinging rump of boil'd beef and carrots, and ſo 'faith I have told her.

Cler. That's ſomething familiar: Are you ſo near man and wife?

Care. O nearer; for I ſometimes plague her till ſhe hates the very ſight of me.

Cler. Ha! ha! very good! So being a very troubleſome lover, you pretend to cure her of her phyſic by a counter poiſon.

Care. Right; I intend to fee a doctor to preſcribe her an hour of my converſation to be taken every night and morning; and this to be continued till her fever of averſion's over.

Cler. An admirable recipe!

Care. Well, Tom, but how ſtands thy own affair? Is Clarinda kind yet?

Cler. Faith I can't ſay ſhe's abſolutely kind, but ſhe's pretty near it; for ſhe's grown ſo ridiculouſly ill-humour'd to me of late, that if ſhe keeps the ſame airs a week longer, I am in hopes to find as much eaſe from her folly, as my conſtancy would from her good-nature ——But to be plain, I'm afraid I have ſome ſecret rival in the caſe; for women's vanity ſeldom gives them courage enough to uſe an old lover heartily ill, till they are firſt ſure of a new one, that they intend to uſe better.

Care. What ſays Sir Solomon? He is your friend, I preſume?

Cler. Yes, at leaſt I can make him ſo when I pleaſe: There is an odd five hundred pound in her fortune; that he has a great mind ſhou'd ſtick to his fingers, when he pays in the reſt on't; which I am afraid I muſt comply with, for ſhe can't eaſily marry without his conſent. And yet ſhe's ſo alter'd in her behaviour of late, that I ſcarce know what to do——Pr'ythee take a turn and adviſe me.

Care. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *changes to* Sir Solomon Sadlife's *houſe.*

Enter Sir Solomon, *and* Supple *his man.*

Sir Sol. Supple, doſt not thou perceive I put a great confidence in thee? I truſt thee with my boſom ſecrets.

Sup.

Sup. Yes, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah, Supple! I begin to hate my wife—— but be secret.

Sup. I'll never tell while I live, sir.

Sir Sol. Nay, then I'll trust thee further: Between thee and I, Supple, I have reason to believe my wife hates me too.

Sup. Ah! dear sir, I doubt that's no secret; for to say the truth, my lady's bitter young and gamesome.

Sir Sol. But can she have the impudence, think'st thou, to make a cuckold of a knight, one that was dubb'd by the royal sword?

Sup. Alas! sir, I warrant she has the courage of a countess; if she's once provok'd, she cares not what she does in her passion, if you were ten times a knight, she'd give you dub for dub, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah! Supple, when her blood's up, I confess she's the devil; and I question if the whole conclave of cardinals could lay her. But suppose she shou'd resolve to give me a sample of her sex, and make me a cuckold in cool blood?

Sup. Why, if she shou'd, sir, don't take it so to heart, cuckolds are no such monsters now-a-days: In the city you know, sir, it's so many honest men's fortune, that no body minds it there; and at this end of the town a cuckold has as much respect as his wife, for aught I see; for gentlemen don't know but it may be their own case another day, and so people are willing to do as they would be done by.

Sir Sol. And yet I do not think but my spouse is honest—and think she is not—wou'd I were satisfy'd.

Sup. Troth, sir, I don't know what to think, but in my conscience I believe good looking after her can do her no harm.

Sir Sol. Right, Supple; and in order to it, I'll first demolish her visiting days. For how do I know but they may be so many private clubs for cuckoldom?

Sup. Ah! sir, your worship knows I was always against your coming to this end of the town.

Sir Sol. Thou wert indeed, my honest Supple: But woman! fair and faithless woman, worm'd and work'd me to her wishes; like fond Mark Anthony I let my empire moulder from my hands, and gave up all for

love.——I muſt have a young wife, with a murrain to me—I hate her to—and yet the devil on't is, I'm ſtill jealous of her—Stay! let me reckon up all the faſhionable virtues ſhe has that can make a man happy. In the firſt place—I think her very ugly.——

Sup. Ah! that's becauſe you are marry'd to her, ſir.

Sir Sol. As for her expences, no arithmetic can reach 'em; ſhe's always longing for ſomething dear and uſeleſs; ſhe will certainly ruin me in china, ſilks, ribbands, fans, laces, perfumes, waſhes, powder, patches, jeſſamine-gloves, and ratifia.

Sup. Ah! ſir, that's a cruel liquor with 'em.

Sir Sol. To ſum up all wou'd run me mad——The only way to put a ſtop to her career, muſt be to put off my coach, turn away her chairmen, lock out her Swiſs porter, bar up the doors, keep out all viſiters, and then ſhe'll be leſs expenſive.

Sup. Ay, ſir, for few women think it worth their while to dreſs for their huſbands.

Sir Sol. Then we ſhan't be plagu'd with my old lady Tittle Tattle's howd'ye's in a morning, nor my lady Dainty's ſpleen, or the ſudden indiſpoſition of that grim beaſt her horrible Dutch maſtiff.

Sup. No, ſir, nor the impertinence of that great fat creature, my Lady Swill-Tea.

Sir Sol. And her ſquinting daughter.——No, Supple, after this night, nothing in petticoats ſhall come within ten yards of my doors.

Sup. Nor in breeches neither?

Sir Sol. Only Mr. Clerimont; for I expect him to ſign articles with me for the five hundred pounds he is to give me, for that ungovernable jade my niece Clarinda.——But now to my own affairs. I'll ſtep into the park, and ſee if I can meet with my hopeful ſpouſe there. I warrant, engag'd in ſome innocent freedom, as ſhe calls it, as walking in a maſk, to laugh at the impertinencies of fops that don't know her; but 'tis more likely, I'm afraid, a plot to intrigue with thoſe that do. Oh! how many torments lie in the ſmall circle of a wedding-ring! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE Clarinda's *apartment.*

Enter Clarinda *and* Sylvia.

Clar. HA! ha! poor Sylvia!

Syl. Nay, pr'ythee, don't laugh at me. There's no accounting for inclination: For if there were, you know, why ſhould it be a greater folly in me, to fall in love with a man I never ſaw but once in my life, than it is in you to reſiſt an honeſt gentleman, whoſe fidelity has deſerv'd your heart an hundred times over.

Clar. Ah! but an utter ſtranger, couſin, and one that, for aught you know, may be no gentleman.

Syl. That's impoſſible; his converſation could not be counterfeit. An elevated wit, and good breeding, have a natural luſtre that's inimitable. Beſide, he ſav'd my life at the hazard of his town; ſo that part of what I gave him, is but gratitude.

'*Clar.* Well! you are the firſt woman that ever took 'fire in the middle of the Thames, ſure.' But ſuppoſe now he is marry'd, and has three or four children!

Syl. Pſha! prythee don't teaze me with ſo many ill-natur'd objections: I tell you he is not marry'd, I am ſure he is not; for I never ſaw a face look more in humour in my life.—Beſide, he told me himſelf, he was a country gentleman, juſt come to town upon buſineſs: And I'm reſolv'd to believe him.

Clar. Well! well! I'll ſuppoſe you both as fit for one another as a couple of tallies. But, ſtill, my dear, you know there's a ſurly old father's command againſt you; he is in articles to marry you to another: And tho' I know love is a notable contriver, I can't ſee how you'll get over that difficulty.

Syl. 'Tis a terrible one, I own; but with a little of your aſſiſtance, dear Clarinda, I am ſtill in hopes to bring it to an even wager, I prove as wiſe as my father.

Clar. Nay, you may be ſure of me: You may ſee by the management of my own amours, I have ſo natural a compaſſion for diſobedience, I ſha'nt be able to refuſe you

you any thing in diſtreſs.—There's my hand;—tell me how I can ſerve you?

Syl. Why thus:——Becauſe I wou'd not wholly diſcover myſelf to him at once, I have ſent him a note to viſit me here, as if theſe lodgings were my own.

Clar. Hither! to my lodgings! 'Twas well I ſent Col. Standfaſt word I ſhould not be at home. [*Aſide.*

Syl. I hope you'll pardon my freedom, ſince one end of my taking it too, was to have your opinion of him before I engage any farther.

Clar. O! it needs no apology; any thing of mine is at your ſervice.——I am only afraid, my troubleſome lover Mr. Clerimont ſhou'd happen to ſee him, who is of late ſo impertinently jealous of a rival, though from what cauſe I know not—— not but I lye too. [*Aſide.* I ſay, ſhou'd he ſee him, your country gentleman wou'd be in danger, I can tell you.

Syl. O! there's no fear of that; for I have order'd him to be brought in the back way: When I have talk'd with him a little alone, I'll find an occaſion to leave him with you; and then we'll compare our opinions of him.

Enter ſervant to Clarinda.

Serv. Madam, my Lady Sadlife. [*Exit.*

Syl. Pſhah! ſhe here!

Clar. Don't be uneaſy; ſhe ſhan't diſturb you: I'll take care of her.

Enter Lady Sadlife.

Lady Sad. O, my dears, you have loſt the ſweeteſt morning ſure, that ever peep'd out of the firmament. The park never was in ſuch perfection.

Clar. 'Tis always ſo when your ladyſhip's there.

Lady Sad. 'Tis never ſo without my dear Clarinda.

Syl. How civilly we women hate one another! [*Aſide.* Was there a good deal of company, madam?

Lady Sad. Abundance! and the beſt I have ſeen this ſeaſon: for 'twas between twelve and one, the very hour you know when the mob are violently hungry. O! the air was ſo inſpiring! ſo amorous! And, to complete the pleaſure, I was attack'd in converſation by the moſt charming, modeſt, agreeably inſinuating young fellow, ſure, that ever woman play'd the fool with.

Clar.

Clar. Who was it?

Lady Sad. Nay, Heav'n knows; his face is as entirely new as his converſation. What wretches our young fellows are to him?

Syl. What ſort of a perſon?

Lady Sad. Tall, ſtreight, well-limb'd, walk'd firm; and a look as chearful as a May-day morning.

Syl. The picture's very like: Pray Heav'n it is not my gentleman's. [*Aſide.*

Clar. I wiſh this don't prove my colonel. [*Aſide.*

Syl. How came you to part with him ſo ſoon?

Lady Sad. O name it not! that eternal damper of all pleaſure, my huſband, Sir Solomon, came into the Mall in the very criſis of our converſation—I ſaw him at a diſtance, and complain'd that the air grew tainted, that I was ſick o'th' ſudden, and left him in ſuch abruptneſs and confuſion, as if he had been himſelf my huſband.

Clar. A melancholy diſappointment, indeed!

Lady Sad. Oh! 'tis a huſband's nature to give 'em.

A ſervant enters and whiſpers Sylvia.

Syl. Deſire him to walk in—couſin, you'll be at hand.

Clar. In the next room—come, madam, Sylvia has a little buſineſs. I'll ſhew you ſome of the ſweeteſt, prettieſt figur'd china.——

Lady Sad. My dear, I wait on you.

[*Exeunt* Lady Sad. *and* Clar.

Enter Atall, *as* Mr. Freeman.

Syl. You find, ſir, I have kept my word in ſeeing you; 'tis all you yet have aſked of me; and when I know 'tis in my power to be more obliging, there's nothing you can command in honour I ſhall refuſe you.

At. This generous offer, madam, is ſo high an obligation, that it were almoſt mean in me to aſk a farther favour. But 'tis a lover's merit to be a miſer in his wiſhes, and graſp at all occaſions to enrich 'em.—I own I feel your charms too ſenſibly prevail, but dare not give a looſe to my ambitious thoughts, 'till I have paſs'd one dreadful doubt that ſhakes 'em.

Syl. If 'tis in power to clear it, aſk me freely.

At. I tremble at the trial; and yet methinks my fears are vain: But yet to kill or cure 'em once for ever, be juſt and tell me; are you married?

If

Syl. If that can make you eaſy, no.

At. 'Tis eaſe indeed—nor are you promis'd, nor your heart engag'd?

Syl. That's hard to tell you: But to be juſt, I own my father has engag'd my perſon to one I never ſaw, and my heart I fear's inclining to one he never ſaw.

At. O yet be merciful, and eaſe my doubt; tell me the happy man that has deſerv'd ſo exquiſite a bleſſing.

Syl. That, ſir, requires ſome pauſe: Firſt tell me why your're ſo inquiſitive, without letting me know the condition of your own heart.

At. In every circumſtance my heart's the ſame with yours; 'tis promis'd to one I never ſaw, by a commanding father, who, by my firm hopes of happineſs, I am reſolv'd to diſobey, unleſs your cruelty prevents it.

Syl. But my diſobedience would beggar me.

At. Baniſh that fear. I'm heir to a fortune will ſupport you like yourſelf—May I not know your family?

Syl. Yet you muſt not.

At. Why that nicety? Is not it in my power to enquire whoſe houſe this is when I am gone?

Syl. And be never the wiſer: Theſe lodgings are a friend's, and are only borrowed on this occaſion: But to ſave you the trouble of any further needleſs queſtions, I will make you one propoſal. I have a young lady here within, who is the only confident of my engagements to you: On her opinion I rely; nor can you take it ill, if I make no farther ſteps without it: 'Twould be miſerable indeed ſhou'd we both meet beggars. I own your actions and appearance merit all you can deſire; let her be as well ſatisfy'd of your pretenſions and condition, and you ſhall find it ſha'n't be a little fortune ſhall make me ungrateful.

At. So generous an offer exceeds my hopes.

Syl. Who's there? [*Enter ſervant.*. Deſire my couſin Clarinda to walk in.

At. Ha! Clarinda! if it ſhould be my Clarinda now, I'm in a ſweet condition—by all that's terrible the very ſhe; this was finely contriv'd of fortune.

Enter Clarinda.

Clar. Defend me! Col. Standfaſt! ſhe has certainly diſcover'd my affairs with him, and has a mind to inſult me

me by an affected resignation of her pretensions to him —I'll disappoint her, I won't know him.

Syl. Cousin, pray, come forward; this is the gentleman I am so much oblig'd to—sir, this lady is a relation of mine, and the person we are speaking of.

At. I shall be proud to be better known among any of your friends. [*Salutes her.*

Clar. Soh! he takes the hint, I see, and seems not to know me neither: I know not what to think.—I am confounded! I hate both him and her. How unconcern'd he looks! confusion! he addresses her before my face. [*Aside.*

Lady Sadlife *peeping in.*

Lady Sad. What do I see? The pleasant young fellow that talk'd with me in the park just now! This is the luckiest accident! I must know a little more of him. [*Retires.*

Syl. Cousin, and Mr. Freeman—I think I need not make any apology—you both know the occasion of my leaving you together——in a quarter of an hour I'll wait on you again. [*Exit* Syl.

At. So, I'm in a hopeful way now, faith; but buff's the word: I'll stand it.

Clar. Mr. Freeman! So, my gentleman has chang'd his name too! How harmless he looks—I have my senses sure, and yet the demureness of that face looks as if he had a mind to persuade me out of 'em. I could find in my heart to humour his assurance, and see how far he'll carry it—Won't you please to sit, sir? [*They sit.*

At. What the devil can this mean?—Sure she has a mind to counterface me, and not know me too—With all my heart: If her ladyship won't know me, I'm sure 'tis not my business at this time to know her. [*Aside.*

Clar. Certainly that face is a cannon proof. [*Aside.*

At. Now for a formal speech, as if I had never seen her in my life before. [*Aside.*] Madam—a hem! Madam,—I—a hem!

Clar. Curse of that steady face. [*Aside.*

At. I say, madam, since I am an utter stranger to you I am afraid it will be very difficult for me to offer you more arguments than one to do me a friendship with your cousin; but if you are, as she seems to own you her real friend, I presume you can't give her a better proof

proof of your being ſo, than pleading the cauſe of a ſincere and humble lover, whoſe tender wiſhes never can propoſe to taſte of peace in life without her.

Clar. Umph! I'm chok'd. [*Aſide.*

At. She gave me hopes, that when I had ſatisfied you of my birth and fortune, you wou'd do me the honour to let me know her name and family.

Clar. Sir, I muſt own you are the moſt perfect maſter of your art, that ever enter'd the liſts of aſſurance.

At. Madam!

Clar. And I don't doubt but you'll find it a much eaſier taſk to impoſe upon my couſin, than me.

At. Impoſe, madam! I ſhould be ſorry any thing I have ſaid could diſoblige you into ſuch hard thoughts of me: Sure madam, you are under ſome miſinformation.

Clar. I was indeed, but now my eyes are open—for 'till this minute I never knew that the gay Col. Standfaſt, was the demure Mr. Freeman.

At. Col. Standfaſt! This is extremely dark, madam.

Clar. This jeſt is tedious, ſir—impudence grows dull, when 'tis ſo very extravagant.

At. Madam, I am a gentleman——but not yet wiſe enough, I find, to account for the humours of a fine lady.

Clar. Troth, ſir, on ſecond thoughts I begin to be a little better reconcil'd to your aſſurance; 'tis in ſome ſort modeſty to deny yourſelf; for to own your perjuries to my face, had been an inſolence tranſcendently provoking.

At. Really, madam, my not being able to apprehend one word of all this is a great inconvenience to my affair with your couſin: But if you will firſt do me the honour to make me acquainted with her name and family, I don't much care if I do take a little pains afterwards to come to a right underſtanding with you.

Clar. Come! come! ſince you ſee this aſſurance will do you no good, you had better put on a ſimple look, and generouſly confeſs your frailties: The ſame ſlyneſs that deceiv'd me firſt, will ſtill find me woman enough to pardon you.

At. That bite won't do. [*Aſide.*] Sure, madam, you miſtake me for ſome other perſon!

Clar.

Clar. Insolent! audacious villain! I am not to have my senses then!

At. No. [*Aside.*

Clar. And you are resolv'd to stand it to the last!

At. The last extremity. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well, sir, since you are so much a stranger to Colonel Standfast, I'll tell you where to find him, and tell him this from me; I hate him, scorn, detest, and loath him: I never meant him but at best for my diversion, and should he ever renew his dull addresses to me, I'll have him used as his vain insolence deserves. Now, sir, I have no more to say, and I desire you would leave the house immediately.

At. I would not willingly disoblige you, madam, but 'tis impossible to stir 'till I have sent your cousin, and clear'd myself of these strange aspersions.

Clar. Don't flatter yourself, sir, with so vain a hope, for I must tell you once for all, you've seen the last of her: And if you won't be gone, you'll oblige me to have you forc'd away.

At. I'll be even with you. [*Aside.*] Well, madam, since I find nothing can prevail upon your cruelty, I'll take my leave: But as you hope for justice on the man that wrongs you, at least be faithful to your lovely friend. And when you have nam'd to her my utmost guilt, yet paint my passion as it is, sincere. Tell her what tortures I endur'd in this severe exclusion from her sight, that 'till my innocence is clear to her, and she again receives me into mercy.

A madman's frenzy's heav'n to what I feel;
The wounds you give 'tis she alone can heal. [*Exit.*

Clar. Most abandon'd impudence! And yet I know not which vexes me most, his out-facing my senses, or his insolent owning his passion for my cousin to my face: 'Tis impossible she cou'd put him upon this, it must be all his own; but be it as it will, by all that's woman I'll have revenge. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Atall *and* Lady Sadlife *at the other side.*

At. Hey-dey! is there no way down stairs here? death! I can't find my way out! This is the oddest house.

Lady Sad. Here he is—I'll venture to pass by him.

At. Pray, madam, which is the nearest way out?

Lady

Lady Sad. Sir! out——a——

At. O my ſtars! is't you, madam, this is fortunate indeed—I beg you'll tell me, do you live here, madam?

Lady Sad. Not very far off, ſir: But this is no place to talk with you alone—indeed I muſt beg your pardon.

At. By all thoſe kindling charms that fire my ſoul, no conſequence on earth ſhall make me quit my hold, till you've given me ſome kind aſſurance that I ſhall ſee you again, and ſpeedily: I'gad I'll have one out of the family at leaſt.

Lady Sad. O good, here's company!

At. O do not rack me with delays, but quick, before this dear ſhort-liv'd opportunity's loſt, inform me where you live, or kill me: To part with this ſoft white hand is ten thouſand daggers to my heart.

[*Kiſſing it eagerly.*

Lady Sad. O lud! I am going home this minute: And if you ſhou'd offer to dog my chair, I proteſt I—— was ever ſuch uſage——lord——ſure! oh——follow me down then. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Clarinda, *and* Sylvia.

Syl. Ha! ha! ha!

Clar. Nay, you may laugh, madam, but what I tell you is true.

Syl. Ha! ha! ha!

Clar. You don't believe then?

Syl. I do believe, that when ſome women are inclin'd to like a man, nothing more palpably diſcovers it, than their railing at him; ha! ha!——Your pardon, couſin; you know you laugh'd at me juſt now upon the ſame occaſion.

Clar. The occaſion's quite different, madam; I hate him. And, once more I tell you, he's a villain, you're impos'd on. He's a colonel of foot, his regiment's now in Spain, and his name's Standfaſt.

Syl. But pray, good couſin, whence had you this intelligence of him?

Clar. From the ſame place that you had your falſe account, madam, his own mouth.

Syl. What was his buſineſs with you?

Clar. Much about the ſame, as his buſineſs with you ——love.

Syl.

DOUBLE GALLANT.

Mor ad viv. del. Walker sculp.

Mrs. ABINGTON as LADY SADLIFE.

Olud! I'm going home this minute: And if you should offer to dog my Chair, I protest I_was ever such usage_Lord_sure! oh_Follow me down then.

Act 3d Sc.

Syl. Love! to you!

Clar. Me, madam! Lord! What am I? Old! or a monſter! Is it ſo prodigious that a man ſhould like me?

Syl. No! but I'm amaz'd to think, if he had lik'd you, he ſhou'd leave you ſo ſoon, for me!

Clar. For you! leave me for you! No, madam, I did not tell you that neither! ha! ha!

Syl. No! What made you ſo violently angry with him then? Indeed, couſin, you had better take ſome other fairer way; this artifice is much too weak to make me break with him. But, however, to let you ſee I can be ſtill a friend; prove him to be what you ſay he is, and my engagements with him ſhall ſoon be over.

Clar. Look you, madam, not but I ſlight the tendereſt of his addreſſes; but to convince you that my vanity was not miſtaken in him, I'll write to him by the name of Col. Standfaſt, and do you the ſame by that of Freeman; and let's each appoint him to meet us at my Lady Sadlife's at the ſame time: If theſe appear two different men, I think our diſpute's eaſily at an end; if but one, and he does not own all I've ſaid of him to your face, I'll make you a very humble curt'ſy, and beg your pardon.

Syl. And if he does own it, I'll make your ladyſhip the ſame reverence, and beg yours.

Enter Clerimont.

Clar. Pſhah! he here!

Cler. I am glad to find you in ſuch good company, madam.

Clar. One's ſeldom long in good company, ſir.

Cler. I am ſorry mine has been ſo troubleſome of late; but I value your eaſe at too high a rate, to diſturb it. [*Going.*

Syl. Nay, Mr. Clerimont, upon my word you ſhan't ſir. Hark you—[*Whiſpers.*] Your pardon, couſin.

Clar. I muſt not loſe him neither—Mr. Clerimont's way is, to be ſevere in his conſtruction of people's meaning.

Syl. I'll write my letter, and be with you, couſin. [*Ex.*

Cler. It was always my principle, madam, to have an humble opinion of my merit; when a woman of ſenſe frowns upon me, I ought to think I deſerve it.

Clar.

Clar. But to expect to be always receiv'd with a ſmile, I think, is having a very extraordinary opinion of one's merit.

Cler. We differ a little as to fact, madam: For theſe ten days paſt, I have had no diſtinction, but a ſevere reſervedneſs. You did not uſe to be ſo ſparing of your good-humour; and while I ſee you gay to all the world but me, I can't but be a little concern'd at the change.

Clar. If he has diſcover'd the colonel now, I'm undone! he cou'd not meet him, ſure.——I muſt humour him a little. [*Aſide.*] Men of your ſincere temper, Mr. Clerimont, I own, don't always meet with the uſage they deſerve: but women are giddy things, and had we no errors to anſwer for, the uſe of good-nature in a lover wou'd be loſt. Vanity is our inherent weakneſs: You muſt not chide, if we are ſometimes fonder of your paſſions than your prudence.

Cler. This friendly condeſcenſion makes me more your ſlave than ever. O! yet be kind, and tell me, have I been tortur'd with a groundleſs jealouſy?

Clar. Let your own heart be judge ——— but don't take it ill if I leave you now—I have ſome earneſt buſineſs with my couſin Sylvia:—But to-night at my Lady Dainty's I'll make you amends; you'll be there.

Cler. I need not promiſe you.

Clar. Your ſervant.—Ah! how eaſily is poor ſincerity impos'd on! Now for the colonel. [*Aſide.*

[*Exit.*

Cler. This unexpected change of humour more ſtirs my jealouſy than all her late ſeverity.——I'll watch her cloſe.

For ſhe that from a juſt reproach is kind,
Gives more ſuſpicion of her guilty mind, [blind.
And throws her ſmiles, like duſt, to ſtrike the lover

[*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE Lady Dainty's *apartment: A table, with phials, gallipots, glaſſes,* &c.

Lady Dainty, *and* Situp *her woman.*

Lady D. SITUP! Situp!

Sit. Madam!

Lady D. Thou art ſtrangely ſlow; I told thee the hartſhorn; I have the vapours to that degree.———

Sit. If your ladyſhip would take my advice you ſhou'd e'en fling your phyſic out of the window; if you were not in perfect health in three days, I'd be bound to be ſick for you.

Lady D. Peace, goody impertinence! I tell thee, no woman of quality is, or ſhou'd be in perfect health—Huh! huh! [*Coughs faintly.*] To be always in health is as vulgar as to be always in humour, and wou'd equally betray one's want of wit and breeding;—— where are the fellows?

Sit. Here, madam—— [*Enter two footmen.*

Lady D. Cæſar!—run to my Lady Roundſides; deſire to know how ſhe reſted; and tell her the violence of my cold is abated: Huh! huh! Pompey, ſtep you to my Lady Killchairman's; give my ſervice; ſay, I have been ſo embarraſs'd with the ſpleen all this morning, that I am under the greateſt uncertainty in the world, whether I ſhall be able to ſtir out, or no—And, d'ye hear! deſire to know how my lord does, and the new monkey—— [*Exeunt footmen.*

Sit. In my conſcience, theſe great ladies make themſelves ſick to make themſelves buſineſs; and are well or ill, only in ceremony to one another. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. Where's t'other fellow?

Sit. He is not return'd yet, madam.

Lady D. 'Tis indeed a ſtrange lump, not fit to carry a diſeaſe to any body; I ſent him t'other day to the dutcheſs of Diet-Drink with the colic, and the brute put it into his own tramontane language, and call'd it the belly-ach:——

Sit. I wiſh your ladyſhip had not occaſion to ſend for any, for my part———

Lady D. Thy part?—pr'ythee! thou wert made of the rough maſculine kind;—'tis betraying our ſex not to be ſickly and tender.—All the families I viſit, have ſomething deriv'd to 'em from the elegant nice ſtate of indiſpoſition; you ſee, even in the men, a genteel, as it were, ſtagger, or twine of the bodies; as if they were not yet confirm'd enough for the rough laborious exerciſe of walking, 'a lazy ſaunter in their motion, 'ſomething ſo quality! and their voices ſo ſoft and 'low, you'd think they were falling aſleep, they are ſo 'very delicate.

'*Sit.* But methinks, madam, it wou'd be better if 'the men were not altogether ſo tender.

'*Lady D.* Indeed, I have ſometimes wiſh'd the crea-'tures were not, but that the niceneſs of their frame ſo 'much diſtinguiſhes 'em from the herd of common 'people:' Nay, ev'n moſt of their diſeaſes, you ſee, are not prophan'd by the crowd: The *apoplexy*, the gout, and vapours, are all peculiar to the nobility.—Huh! huh! and I could almoſt wiſh, that colds were only our's;—there's ſomething in 'em ſo genteel,—ſo agreeably diſordering—huh! huh!

Sit. That, I hope, I ſhall never be fit for 'em——Your ladyſhip forgot the ſpleen.

Lady D. Oh!——my dear ſpleen,——I grudge that ev'n to ſome of us.

Sit. I knew an ironmonger's wife, in this city, that was mightily troubled with it.

Lady D. Foh! What a creature haſt thou nam'd! An ironmonger's wife have the ſpleen! Thou might'ſt as well have ſaid her huſband was a fine gentleman——give me ſomething.

Sit. Will your ladyſhip pleaſe to take any of the ſteel drops? or the bolus? or the electuary? or——

Lady D. This wench will ſmother me with queſtions,—huh! huh! bring any of 'em——theſe healthy ſluts are ſo boiſterous, they ſplit one's brains: I fancy myſelf in an inn while ſhe talks to me—I muſt have ſome decay'd perſon of quality about me: For the commons of England are the ſtrangeſt creatures——huh! huh!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mrs. Sylvia, madam, is come to wait upon your ladyſhip.

Lady D. Desire her to walk in;—let the physic alone:—I'll take a little of her company; she's mighty good for the spleen.

Enter Sylvia.

Syl. Dear Lady Dainty!

Lady D. My good creature, I'm over-joy'd to see you——huh! huh!

Syl. I am sorry to see your ladyship wrapt up thus; I was in hopes to have had your company to the Indian house.

Lady D. If any thing could tempt me abroad, 'twou'd be that place, and such agreeable company; but how came you, dear Sylvia, to be reconcil'd to any thing in an Indian house? you us'd to have a most barbarous inclination for our own odious manufactures.

Syl. Nay, madam, I am only going to recruit my tea-table: As to the rest of their trumpery, I am as much out of humour with it as ever.

Lady D. Well! thou art a pleasant creature, thy distaste is so diverting.

Syl. And your ladyship is so expensive, that really I am not able to come into it.

Lady D. Now it is to me prodigious! how some women can muddle away their money upon housewifery, children, books, and charities, when there are so many well-bred ways, and foreign curiosities, that more elegantly require it—I have every morning the rarities of all countries brought to me, and am in love with every new thing I see.——Are the people come yet, Situp?

Sit. They have been below, madam, this half hour.

Lady D. Dispose 'em in the parlour, and we'll be there presently. [*Exit* Sit.

Syl. How can your ladyship take such pleasure in being cheated with the bawbles of other countries?

Lady D. Thou art a very infidel to all finery.

Syl. And you are a very bigot——

Lady D. A person of all reason, and no complaisance.

Syl. And your ladyship all complaisance, and no reason.

Lady D. Follow me, and be converted. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Situp, *a woman with china ware*; *an* Indian Man *with ſcreens, tea, &c. a* Birdman *with a paroquet, monkey, &c.*

Sit. Come! come into this room.

Chi. I hope your ladyſhip's lady won't be long in coming.

Sit. I don't care if ſhe never comes to you.——It ſeems you trade with the ladies for old cloaths, and give 'em china for their gowns and petticoats, I'm like to have a fine time on't with ſuch creatures as you indeed!

Chi. Alas! madam, I'm but a poor woman, and am forc'd to do any thing to live: Will your ladyſhip be pleas'd to accept of a piece of china?

Sit. Puh! no;—I don't care.—Though I muſt needs ſay you look like an honeſt woman. [*Looks on it.*

Chi. Thank you, good madam.

Sit. Our places are like to come to a fine paſs indeed, if our ladies muſt buy their china with our perquiſites: At this rate, my lady ſha'n't have an old fan, or a glove; but———

Chi. Pray, madam, take it.

Sit. No, not I; I won't have it, eſpecially without a ſaucer to't. Here, take it again.

Chi. Indeed you ſhall accept of it.

Sit. Not I, truly—come, give it me, give it me; here's my lady.

Enter Lady Dainty *and* Sylvia.

Lady D. Well, my dear, is not this a pretty ſight now?

Syl. It's better than ſo many doctors and apothecaries, indeed.

Lady D. All trades muſt live you know; and thoſe no more than theſe could ſubſiſt, if the world were all wiſe, or healthy.

Syl. I'm afraid our real diſeaſes are but few to our imaginary, and doctors get more by the ſound than the ſickly.

Lady D. My dear, you're allowed to ſay any thing—but now I muſt talk with the people.——Have you got any thing new there?

Chi.
Ind.
Bird. } Yes, an't pleaſe your ladyſhip.

Lady

Lady D. One at once.——

Bird. I have brought your ladyſhip the fineſt monkey.——

Syl. What a filthy thing it is!

Lady D. I now think he looks very humourous and agreeable—I vow in a white perriwig he might do miſchief; could he but talk and take ſnuff, there's ne'er a fop in town would go beyond him.

Syl. Moſt fops would go farther if they did not ſpeak; but talking, indeed, makes 'em very often worſe company than monkies.

Lady D. Thou pretty little picture of man——How very Indian he looks! I cou'd kiſs the dear creature.

Syl. Ah! don't touch him, he'll bite.

Bird. No, madam, he is the tameſt you ever ſaw, and the leaſt miſchievous.

Lady D. Then take him away, I won't have him, for miſchief is the wit of a monkey, and I wou'd not give a farthing for one that wou'd not break me three or four pounds worth of china in a morning. O! I am in love with theſe Indian figures—do but obſerve what an innocent natural ſimplicity there is in all the actions of 'em.

Chi. Theſe are pagods, madam, that the Indians worſhip.

Lady D. So far I am an Indian.

Syl. Now to me they are all monſters.

Lady D. Profane creature!

Chi. Is your ladyſhip for a piece of right Flanders lace?

Lady D. Um—no, I don't care for it now it is not prohibited.

Ind. Will your ladyſhip be pleas'd to have a pound of fine tea?

Lady D. What! filthy odious bohea, I ſuppoſe.

Ind. No madam, right Kappakawawa.

Lady D. Well, there's ſomething in the very ſound of that name, that makes it irreſiſtible——What is't a pound?

Ind. But ſix guineas, madam.

Lady D. How infinitely cheap! I'll buy it all. Situp, take the man in and pay him, and let the reſt call again to-morrow.

Omnes. Bleſs your ladyſhip.

[*Exeunt* Sit. Chi. Ind. *and* Bird.

Lady D. Lord! how feveriſh I am—the leaſt motion does ſo diſorder me—do but feel me.

Syl. No really, I think you are in very good temper!

Lady D. Burning indeed, child.

Enter Servant, Doctor *and* Apothecary.

Serv. Madam, here's Doctor Bolus and the Apothecary. [*Exit.*

Lady D. Oh! doctor, I'm glad you're come, one is not ſure of a moment's life without you.

Dr. How did your ladyſhip reſt, madam?

[*Feels her pulſe.*

Lady D. Never worſe, indeed, doctor: I once fell into a little ſlumber indeed, but then was diſturb'd by the moſt odious frightful dream; that if the fright had not waken'd me, I had certainly periſhed in my ſleep with the apprehenſion.

Dr. A certain ſign of a diſorder'd brain, madam; but I'll order ſomething that ſhall compoſe your ladyſhip.

Lady D. Mr. Rhubarb, I muſt quarrel with you—— you don't diſguiſe your medicines enough, they taſte all phyſic.

Rhub. To alter it more might offend the operation, madam.

Lady D. I don't care what is offended, ſo my taſte is not.

Dr. Hark you, Mr. Rhubarb, withdraw the medicine rather than to make it pleaſant; I'll find a reaſon for the want of it's operation.

Rhub. But, ſir, if we don't look about us ſhe'll grow well upon our hands.

Dr. Never fear that, ſhe's too much a woman of quality to dare to be well without her doctor's opinion.

Rhub. Sir, we have drain'd the whole catalogue of diſeaſes already, there is not another left to put in her head.

Dr. Then I'll make her go 'em over again.

Enter Careleſs.

Care. So! here's the old levee! doctor and apothecary in cloſe conſultation: Now will I demoliſh the quack and his medicines before her face—Mr. Rhubarb,

barb, your ſervant, pray what have you got in your hand there?

Rhub. Only a julep and compoſing draught for my lady, ſir.

Care. Have you ſo, ſir—pray let me ſee—I'll preſcribe to-day—doctor, you may go—the lady ſhall take no phyſic at preſent but me.

Dr. Sir——

Care. Nay, if you won't believe me——

[*Breaks the phials.*

Lady D. Ah!——[*Frighted and leaning upon* Syl.

Dr. Come away, Mr. Rhubarb—he'll certainly put her out of order, and then ſhe'll ſend for us again.

[*Ex.* Doctor *and* Apoth.

Care. You ſee, madam, what pains I take to come into your favour.

Lady D. You take a very prepoſterous way I can tell you, ſir.

Care. I can't tell how I ſucceed, but I am ſure I endeavour right, for I ſtudy every morning new impertinence to entertain you; for ſince I find nothing but dogs, doctors, and monkies are your favourites, it's very hard if your ladyſhip won't admit me as one of the number.

Lady D. When I find you of an equal merit with my monkey, you ſhall be in the ſame ſtate of favour: I confeſs, as a proof of your wit, you have done me as much miſchief here: But you have not half pug's judgment, nor his ſpirit; for the creature will do a world of pleaſant things, without caring whether one likes 'em or not.

Care. Why truly, madam, the little gentleman, my rival, I believe is much in the right on't; and if you obſerve, I have taken as much pains of late to diſoblige, as to pleaſe you.

Lady D. You ſucceed better in one than t'other, I can tell you, ſir.

Care. I am glad on't—for if you had not me now and then to plague you, what would you do for a pretence to be chagreen, to faint, have the ſpleen, the vapours, and all thoſe modiſh diſorders that ſo nicely diſtinguiſh a woman of quality?

Lady D. I am perfectly confounded! Certainly there are ſome people too impudent for our reſentment.

Care. Modeſty's a ſtarving virtue, madam, an old threadbare faſhion of the laſt age, and would ſit as oddly upon a lover now as a picked beard and muſtachios.

Lady D. Moſt aſtoniſhing!

Care. I have try'd ſighing and looking ſilly a great while, but 'twou'd not do—nay, had you had as little wit as good-nature, ſhould have proceeded to dance and ſing—Tell me but how, what face or form can worſhip you, and behold your votary?

Lady D. Not, ſir, as the Perſians do the ſun, with your face towards me: The beſt proof you can give me of your horrid devotion, is never to ſee me more. Come, my dear. [*Exit with* Sylvia.

Syl. I'm amaz'd ſo much aſſurance ſhou'd not ſucceed. [*Exit.*

Care. All this ſha'n't make me out of love with my virtue—Impudence has ever been a ſucceſsful quality—and 'twou'd be hard indeed if I ſhou'd be the firſt that did not thrive by it. [*Exit.*

SCENE, Clerimont's lodgings.

Enter Atall, *and* Finder *his man.*

At. You are ſure you know the houſe again?

Fin. Ah! as well as I do the upper gallery, ſir;—'Tis Sir Solomon Sadlife's, at the two glaſs lanthorns, within three doors of my Lord Duke's.

At. Very well, ſir, then take this letter, enquire for my Lady Sadlife's woman, and ſtay for an anſwer.

Fin. Yes, ſir. [*Exit.*

At. Well, I find 'tis as ridiculous to propoſe pleaſure in love without variety of miſtreſſes, as to pretend to be a keen ſportſman without a good ſtable of horſes: How this lady may prove I can't tell, but if ſhe is not a deedy tit at the bottom, I'm no jockey.

Re-enter Finder.

Fin. Sir, here are two letters for you.

At. Who brought 'em?

Fin. A couple of footmen, and they both deſire an anſwer.

At. Bid 'em ſtay, and do you make haſte where I order'd you.

Fin.

Fin. Yes, ſir. [*Exit.*

At. To Col. Standfaſt—that's Clarinda's hand—To Mr. Freeman—that muſt be my incognita. Ah! I have moſt mind to open this firſt: but if t'other malicious creature ſhou'd have perverted her growing inclination to me, 'twou'd put my whole frame in a trembling. Hold, I'll gueſs my fate by degrees—this may give me a glimpſe of it. [*Reads* Clar. *letter*] Um—um—um—ha! *to meet her at my Lady Sadlife's at ſeven o'clock to-night*, and take no manner of notice of my late diſowning myſelf to her——ſomething's at the bottom of all this—now to ſolve the riddle. [*Reads t'other letter.*] *My couſin Clarinda has told ſome things of you that very much alarm me; but I am willing to ſuſpend my belief of them till I ſee you, which I deſire may be at my Lady Sadlife's at ſeven this evening.* [The devil! the ſame place!] *As you value the real friendſhip of your incognita.*

So now the riddle's out, the rival queens are fairly come to a reference, and one or both of them I muſt loſe, that's poſitive!—Hard!

Enter Clerimont.

Hard fortune! Now, poor impudence, what will become of thee? O Clerimont! ſuch a complication of adventures ſince I ſaw thee, ſuch ſweet hopes, fears and unaccountable difficulties, ſure never poor dog was ſurrounded with.

Cler. O! you are an induſtrious perſon, you'll get over 'em. But pray let's hear.

At. To begin then in the climax of my misfortunes: in the firſt place, the private lodgings that my *Incognita* appointed to receive me in, prove to be the very individual habitation of my other miſtreſs, whom (to complete the blunder of my ill luck) ſhe civilly introduced in perſon to recommend me to her better acquaintance.

Cler. Ha! ha! death! how cou'd you ſtand 'em both together?

At. The old way——buff——I ſtuck like a burr to my name of Freeman, addreſs'd my incognita before the other's face, and with a moſt unmov'd good-breeding, harmleſsly faced her down I had never ſeen her in my life before.

Cler. The prettieſt modeſty I ever heard of. Well, but how did they diſcover you at laſt?

At. Why faith, the matter's yet in ſuſpence, and I find by both their letters that they don't yet well know what to think; (but to go on with my luck) you muſt know they have ſince both appointed me, by ſeveral names, to meet 'em at one and the ſame place at ſeven o'clock this evening.

Cler. Ah!

At. And laſtly to crown my fortune, (as if the devil himſelf moſt triumphantly rode a ſtraddle upon my ruin) the fatal place of their appointment happens to be the very houſe of a third lady, with whom I made an acquaintance ſince morning, and had juſt before ſent word I wou'd viſit near the ſame hour this evening.

Cler. O! murder! poor Atall! thou art really fallen under the laſt degree of compaſſion.

At. And yet with a little of thy aſſiſtance, in the middle of their ſmall ſhot, I don't ſtill deſpair of holding my head above water.

Cler. Death! but you can't meet 'em both, you muſt loſe one of 'em, unleſs you can ſplit yourſelf.

At. Pr'ythee don't ſuſpect my courage or my modeſty, for I'm reſolv'd to go on, if you will ſtand by me.

Cler. Faith, my very curioſity would make me do that—but what can I do?

At. You muſt appear for me upon occaſion in perſon.

Cler. With all my heart—What elſe?

At. I ſhall want a Queen's meſſenger in my intereſt, or rather one that can perſonate one.

Cler. That's eaſily found—but what to do?

At. Come along, and I'll tell you—for firſt I muſt anſwer their letters.

Cler. Thou art an original, faith. [*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *changes to* Sir Solomon's.

Enter Sir Solomon *leading* Lady Sadlife, *and* Wiſhwell *her woman.*

Sir Sol. There, madam, let me have no more of theſe airings—no good, I'm ſure, can keep a woman five or ſix hours abroad in a morning.

Lady Sad. You deny me all the innocent freedoms of life.

Sir Sol. Hah! you have the modiſh cant of this end of this town, I ſee: intriguing, gaming, gadding, and party-

party-quarries with a pox to 'em, are innocent freedoms, forſooth!

Lady Sad. I don't know what you mean; I'm ſure I have not one acquaintance in the world that does an ill thing.

Sir Sol. They muſt be better look'd after than your ladyſhip then; but I'll mend my hand as faſt as I can: do you look to your reputation henceforward, and I'll take care of your perſon.

Lady Sad. You wrong my virtue with theſe unjuſt ſuſpicions.

Sir Sol. Ay, it's no matter for that; better I wrong it than you. I'll ſecure my doors for this day at leaſt. [*Ex.*

Lady Sad. O! Wiſhwell! what ſhall I do?

Wiſh. What's the matter, madam?

Lady Sad. I expect a letter from a gentleman every minute, and if it ſhou'd fall into Sir Solomon's hands, I'm ruin'd paſt redemption.

Wiſh. He won't ſuſpect it, madam, ſure, if they are directed to me, as they uſed to be.

Lady Sad. But his jealouſy's grown ſo violent of late, there's no truſting to it now; if he meets it I ſhall be lock'd up for ever.

Wiſh. O dear, madam! I vow your ladyſhip frights me——Why, he'll kill me for keeping counſel.

Lady Sad. Run to the window, quick, and watch the meſſenger. [*Exit* Wiſh.] Ah! there's my ruin near.——I feel it——[*A knocking at the door.*] What ſhall I do?——Be very inſolent, or very humble, and cry. I have known ſome women upon theſe occaſions, outſtrut their huſband's jealouſy, and make 'em aſk pardon for finding 'em out——O lud! here he comes——I can't do't, my courage fails me——I muſt e'en ſtick to my handkerchief, and truſt to nature.

Re-enter Sir Solomon, *taking a letter from* Finder.

Sir Sol. Sir, I ſhall make bold to read this letter; and if you have a mind to ſave your bones, there's your way out.

Fin. O terrible! I ſha'n't have a whole one in my ſkin when I come home to my maſter— [*Exit* Finder.

Lady Sad. [*Aſide.*] I'm loſt for ever.

Sir Sol. [Reads.] *Pardon, moſt divine creature, the impatience of my heart*; [Very well! theſe are her innocent

freedoms! ah! cockatrice!] *which languiſhes for an opportunity to convince you of it's ſincerity* [O the tender——ſon of a whore!] *which nothing could relieve but the ſweet hope of ſeeing you this evening,* [Poor lady! whoſe virtue I have wrong'd with unjuſt ſuſpicions!]

Lady Sad. I'm ready to ſink with apprehenſion!

Sir Sol. ——*To-night, at ſeven, expect your dying Strephon.* [Die, and be damn'd; for I'll remove your comforter, by cutting her throat—I could find in my heart to ram his impudent letter into her windpipe—Ha! what's this!] *To Mrs. Wiſhwell, my Lady Sadlife's woman.*

Ad, I'm glad of it with all my heart—What a happy thing 'tis to have one's jealouſy diſappointed!—Now have I been curſing my poor wife for the miſtaken wickedneſs of that trollop—'Tis well I kept my thoughts to myſelf: for the virtue of a wife, when wrongfully accus'd, is moſt unmercifully inſolent—Come, I'll do a great thing—I'll kiſs her, and make her amends—What's the matter, my dear, has any thing frighted you?

Lady Sad. Nothing but your hard uſage.

Sir Sol. Come! come! dry thy tears, it ſhall be ſo no more—But, hark ye! I have made a diſcovery here—Your Wiſhwell I'm afraid is a ſlut—She has an intrigue.

Lady Sad. An intrigue! Heavens, in our family!

Sir Sol. Read there—I wiſh ſhe be honeſt——

Lady Sad. How!——if there be the leaſt ground to think it, Sir Solomon, poſitively ſhe ſha'n't ſtay a minute in the houſe—Impudent creature—have an affair with a man!

Sir Sol. But hold, my dear—don't let your virtue cenſure too ſeverely neither.

Lady Sad. I ſhudder at the thoughts of her.

Sir Sol. Patience, I ſay, how do we know but his courtſhip may be honourable?

Lady Sad. That, indeed, requires ſome pauſe.

Wiſh. ——[*Peeping in.*] So! all's ſafe I ſee—He thinks the letter's to me—O good madam—that letter was to me the fellow ſays. I wonder, ſir, how you cou'd ſerve one ſo; if my ſweetheart ſhou'd hear you had open'd it, I know he wou'd not have me; ſo he wou'd not.

Sir

Sir Sol. Never fear that, for if he is in love with you, he's too much a fool to value being laugh'd at.

Lady Sad. If it be yours, here take your ſtuff; and next time bid him take better care, than to ſend his letters ſo publickly.

Wiſh. Yes, Madam; but now your ladyſhip has read it, I'd fain beg the honour of Sir Solomon to anſwer it for me; for I can't write.

Lady Sad. Not write!

Sir Sol. Nay, he thinks ſhe's above that I ſuppoſe, for he calls her divine creature—A pretty piece of divinity truly—But come, my dear—Egad, we'll anſwer it for her. Here's paper—you ſhall do it.

Lady Sad. I, Sir Solomon! Lard, I won't write to fellows, not I—I hope he won't take me at my word. [*Aſide.*

Sir Sol. Nay, you ſhall do it—come, 'twill get her a good huſband.

Wiſh. Ay! Pray, good madam, do——

Sir Sol. Ah! how eager the jade is!——

Lady Sad. I can't tell how to write to any body but you, my dear.

Sir Sol. Well! well! I'll dictate then—Come, begin—

Lady Sad. Lard! this is the oddeſt fancy!

[*Sits to write.*

Sir Sol. Come! come! Dear ſir; (for we'll be as loving as he for his ears.)

Wiſh. No, pray, madam, begin, Dear honey, or My deareſt angel.

Lady Sad. Out! you fool! you muſt not be ſo fond—Dear ſir, is very well. [*Writes.*

Sir Sol. Ay! ay! ſo 'tis; but theſe young fillies are for ſetting out at the top of their ſpeed—But pr'ythee, Wiſhwell, what is thy lover? for the ſtyle of his letter may ſerve for a counteſs.

Wiſh. Sir, he's but a butler at preſent; but he's a good ſchollard, as you may ſee by his hand-writing; and in time may come to be a ſteward; and then we ſha'n't be long without a coach, ſir.

Lady Sad. Dear ſir—what muſt I write next?

Sir Sol. Why—— [*Muſing.*

Wiſh. Hoping you are in good health, as I am at this preſent writing.

Sir Sol. You puppy, he'll laugh at you.

Wiſh. I'm ſure my mother us'd to begin all her letters ſo.

Sir Sol. And thou art ev'ry inch of thee her own daughter, that I'll ſay for thee.

Lady Sad. Come, I have done't [Reads.] *Dear Sir, She muſt have very little merit that is inſenſible of yours.*

Sir Sol. Very well, 'faith! write all yourſelf.

Wiſh. Ay! good madam, do; that's better than mine. ——But pray, dear madam, let it end with, So I reſt your deareſt loving friend, till death us do part.

Lady Sad. [*Aſide.*] This abſurd ſlut will make me laugh out.

Sir Sol. But hark you, huſſy; ſuppoſe now you ſhould be a little ſcornful and inſolent to ſhew your breeding, and a little ill-natur'd in it to ſhew your wit.

Wiſh. Ay, Sir! that is, if I deſign'd him for my gallant: but ſince he is to be but my huſband, I muſt be very good-natur'd and civil before I have him; and huff him, and ſhew my wit after.

Sir Sol. Here's a jade for you! [*Aſide.*] But why muſt you huff your huſband, huſſy?

Wiſh. O Sir! that's to give him a good opinion of my virtue; for you know, ſir, a huſband can't think one cou'd be ſo very domineering, if one were not very honeſt.

Sir Sol. 'Sbud! this fool, on my conſcience, ſpeaks the ſenſe of the whole ſex. [*Aſide.*

Wiſh. Then, ſir, I have been told, that a huſband loves one the better, the more one hectors him, as a ſpaniel does the more one beats him.

Sir Sol. Hah! thy huſband will have a bleſſed time on't.

Lady Sad. So! I have done.

Wiſh. O pray, madam, read it.

Lady Sad. [Reads.] *Dear Sir—She muſt have very little merit that is inſenſible of yours; and while you continue to love, and tell me ſo, expect whatever you can hope from ſo much wit, and ſuch unfeigned ſincerity—At the hour you mention, you will be truly welcome to your paſſionate——*

Wiſh. O! madam! it is not half kind enough; pray put in ſome more dears.

Sir Sol. Ay! ay! ſweeten it well—let it be all ſyrup —with a pox to her.

Wiſh. Every line ſhould have a dear ſweet ſir in it; ſo it ſhou'd—He'll think I don't love him elſe.

Sir

Sir Sol. Poor moppet!—

Lady Sad. No! no! 'tis better now—Well, what must be at the bottom to answer Strephon?

Sir Sol. Pray let her divine ladyship sign—Abigail.

Wish. No; pray, madam, put down Lipsamintha.

Sir Sol. Lipsamintha!

Lady Sad. No, come—I'll write Cælia. Here, go in and seal it.

Sir Sol. Ay, come! I'll lend you a wafer, that he may'n't wait for your divinityship.

Wish. Pshaw! you always flout one so.

[*Exeunt* Sir Sol. *and* Wish.

Lady Sad. So! this is luckily over.—Well! I see a woman shou'd never be discourag'd from coming off at the greatest plunge; for though I was half-dead with the fright, yet now I'm a little recovered, I find—

That apprehension does the bliss endear;
The real danger's nothing to the fear. [*Exit.*

ACT IV. SCENE Sir Solomon's.

Enter Lady Sadlife, Atall, *and* Wishwell *with lights.*

Lady Sad. THIS room, I think, is pleasanter; if you please, we'll sit here, sir—Wishwell! shut the door, and take the key o'th' inside, and set chairs.

Wish. Yes, madam.

Lady Sad. Lard! Sir, what a strange opinion you must have of me, for receiving your visits upon so slender an acquaintance?

At. I have a much stranger opinion, madam, of your ordering your servant to lock herself in with us.

Lady Sad. O! You would not have us wait upon ourselves.

At. Really, madam, I can't conceive that two lovers alone have much occasion for attendance. [*They sit.*

Lady Sad. Lovers! Lard! how you talk! can't people converse without that stuff?

At. Um!—yes, madam, people may; but without a little of that stuff, conversation is generally very apt to be insipid.

Lady

Lady Sad. Pooh! why, we can ſay any thing without her hearing, you ſee.

At. Ay! but if we ſhou'd talk ourſelves up to an occaſion of being without her, it wou'd look worſe to ſend her out, than to have let her wait without when ſhe was out.

Lady Sad. You are pretty hard to pleaſe, I find, ſir: ſome men, I believe, wou'd think themſelves well us'd in ſo free a reception as yours.

At. Hah! I ſee, this is like to come to nothing this time; ſo I'll e'en put her out of humour, that I may get off in time to my incognita. [*Aſide.*] Really, madam, I can never think myſelf free, where my hand and my tongue are ty'd. [*Pointing to* Wiſhwell.

Lady Sad. Your converſation, I find, is very different from what it was, ſir.

At. With ſubmiſſion, madam, I think it very proper for the place we are in. If you had ſent for me only to ſip tea, to ſit ſtill, and be civil, with my hat under my arm, like a ſtrange relation from Ireland, or ſo, why was I brought hither with ſo much caution and privacy?

[Sir Solomon *knocks at the door.*

Wiſh. O Heav'ns! my maſter, madam.

Sir Sol. Open the door, there, *(within.)*

Lady Sad. What ſhall we do?

At. Nothing now, I'm ſure.

Lady Sad. Open the door, and ſay the gentleman came to you.

Wiſh. O lud! madam, I ſhall never be able to manage it at ſo ſhort a warning—We had better ſhut the gentleman into the cloſet, and ſay he came to no body at all.

Lady Sad. In! in then, for mercy's ſake, quickly, ſir!

At. Soh; this is like to be a very pretty buſineſs! Oh! ſucceſs and impudence! thou haſt quite forſaken me.

[*Enters the cloſet.*

Wiſh. Do you ſtep into your bed-chamber, madam, and leave my maſter to me. [*Exit* Lady Sadlife.

[Wiſhwell *opens the door, &c.*

Enter Sir Solomon.

Sir Sol. What's the reaſon, miſtreſs, I am to be lock'd out of my wife's apartment?

Wiſh. Sir, my lady was waſhing her——her——neck, ſir, and I cou'd not come any ſooner.

Sir

Sir Sol. I'm ſure I heard a man's voice. [*Aſide.*] Bid your lady come hither.—[*Exit* Wiſhwell.]—He muſt be hereabouts; 'tis ſo! all's out, all's over now: the devil has done his worſt, and I am a cuckold in ſpite of my wiſdom. 'Sbud! now an Italian wou'd poiſon his wife for this, a Spaniard wou'd ſtab her, and a Turk would cut off her head with a ſcimitar; but a poor dog of an Engliſh cuckold now, can only ſquabble and call names —Hold! here ſhe comes.—I muſt ſmother my jealouſy that her guilt mayn't be upon it's guard.

Enter Lady Sadlife, *and* Wiſhwell.

Sir Sol. My dear! how do you do? come hither, and kiſs me.

Lady Sad. I did not expect you home ſo ſoon, my dear.

Sir Sol. Poor rogue—I don't believe you did—with a pox to you. [*Aſide.*] Wiſhwell, go down, I have buſineſs with your lady.

Wiſh. Yes, ſir—but I'll watch you: for I am afraid this good-humour has miſchief at the bottom of it— [*Retires.*

Lady Sad. I ſcarce know whether he's jealous or not.

Sir Sol. Now dare not I go near that cloſet door, leſt the murderous dog ſhould poke a hole in my guts thro' the key-hole.—Um—I have an old thought in my head —ay! and that will diſcover the whole bottom of her affair—'Tis better to ſeem not to know one's diſhonour, when one has not courage enough to revenge it.

Lady Sad. I don't like his looks, methinks.

Sir Sol. Odſo! what have I forgot now—Pr'ythee, my dear, ſtep into my ſtudy, for I am ſo weary! and in the uppermoſt parcel of letters, you'll find one that I receiv'd from Yorkſhire to-day, in the ſcrutoir; bring it down, and ſome paper, I will anſwer it while I think on't.

Lady Sad. If you pleaſe to lend me your key—but had not you better write in your ſtudy, my dear?

Sir Sol. No! no! I tell you, I'm ſo tir'd, I am not able to walk—There! make haſte.

Lady Sad. Wou'd all were well over. [*Exit* Lady Sad.

Sir Sol. 'Tis ſo by her eagerneſs to be rid of me. Well, ſince I find I dare not behave myſelf like a man of honour in this buſineſs, I'll at leaſt act like a perſon of prudence, and penetration: for ſay, ſhou'd I clap a brace of ſlugs now in the very bowels of this raſcal, it may hang me; but if it does not, it can't divorce me:—No, I'll e'en

put out the candles, and in a soft, gentle whore's voice, desire the gentleman to walk about his business; and if I can get him out before my wife returns, I'll fairly post myself in his room; and so, when she comes to set him at liberty, in the dark, I'll humour the cheat, 'till I draw her into some casual confession of the fact, and then this injur'd front shall bounce upon her like a thunderbolt.

[*Puts out the candles.*

Wish. [*Behind.*] Say you so, sir? I'll take care my lady shall be provided for you. [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. Hist! hist! sir! sir!

Enter Atall *from the closet.*

At. Is all clear? may I venture, madam?

Sir Sol. Ay! ay! quick! quick! make haste before Sir Solomon returns. A strait-back'd dog, I warrant him. [*Aside.*] But when shall I see you again?

At. Whenever you'll promise me to make a better use of an opportunity.

Sir Sol. Ha! then 'tis possible he may'nt yet have put the finishing stroke to me.

At. Is this the door?

Sir Sol. Ay! ay! away! [*Exit* Atall.] Soh! now the danger of being murder'd is over; I find my courage returns: and if I catch my wife but inclining to be no better than she shou'd be, I'm not sure that blood won't be the consequence.

[*He goes into the closet and* Wishwell *enters.*

Wish. Soh! my lady has her cue; and, if my wise master can give her no better proofs of his penetration than this, she'd be a greater fool than he, if she shou'd not do what she has a mind to. Sir! sir! come! you may come out now; Sir Solomon's gone.

Enter Sir Solomon *from the closet.*

Sir Sol. So! now for a soft speech to set her impudent blood in a ferment, and then let it out with my penknife. [*Aside.*] Come, dear creature, now let's make the kindest use of our opportunity.

Wish. Not for the world! if Sir Solomon shou'd come again, I shou'd be ruin'd---Pray be gone----I'll send to you to-morrow.

Sir Sol. Nay, now you love me not---You would not let me part else thus unsatisfied.

Wish.

Wiſh. Now you're unkind. You know I love you, or I ſhou'd not run ſuch hazards for you.

Sir Sol. Fond whore! [*Aſide.*] But I'm afraid you love Sir Solomon, and lay up all your tenderneſs for him.

Wiſh. O ridiculous! How can ſo ſad a wretch give you the leaſt uneaſy thought! I loath the very ſight of him.

Sir Sol. Damn'd infernal ſtrumpet——I can bear no longer——Lights! Lights! within there.

[*Seizes her.*

Wiſh. Ah! [*Shrieks.*] Who's this! help! murder!

Sir Sol. No, traitreſs, don't think to 'ſcape me; for now I've trapp'd thee in thy guilt, I cou'd find in my heart to have thee flea'd alive, thy ſkin ſtuff'd, and hung up in the middle of Guild-hall, as a terrible conſequence of cuckoldom to the whole city——Lights there!

Enter Lady Sadlife *with a light.*

Lady Sad. O Heav'ns! what's the matter?

[Sir Solomon *looks aſtoniſh'd.*

Ha! what do I ſee! my ſervant on the floor, and Sir Solomon offering rudeneſs to her! O! I can't bear it! oh! [*Falls into a chair.*

Sir Sol. What has the devil been doing here?

Lady Sad. This the reward of all my virtue! O revenge! revenge!

Sir Sol. My dear! my good, virtuous, injur'd dear, be patient; for here has been ſuch wicked doings——

Lady Sad. O torture! do you own it too! 'tis well my love protects you—But for this wretch! this monſter! this ſword ſhall do me juſtice on her.

[*Runs at* Wiſhwell *with* Sir Solomon's *ſword.*

Sir Sol. O hold! my poor miſtaken dear!—This horrid jade, the Gods can tell, is innocent for me; but ſhe has had, it ſeems, a ſtrong dog in the cloſet here: which I ſuſpecting, put myſelf into his place, and had almoſt trapp'd her in the very impudence of her iniquity.

Lady Sad. How!—I'm glad to find he dares not own 'twas his jealouſy of me——— [*Aſide.*

Wiſh. [*Kneeling.*] Dear madam, I hope your ladyſhip will pardon the liberty I took in your abſence, in bringing

bringing my lover into your ladyſhip's chamber; but I did not think you wou'd come home from prayers ſo ſoon, and ſo I was forc'd to hide him in that cloſet: but my maſter ſuſpecting the buſineſs, it ſeems, turn'd him out unknown to me, and then put himſelf there, and ſo had a mind to diſcover whether there was any harm between us; and ſo becauſe he fancy'd I had been naught with him——

Sir Sol. Ay, my dear; and the jade was ſo confoundedly fond of me, that I grew out of all patience, and fell upon her like a fury.

Lady Sad. Horrid creature! and does ſhe think to ſtay a minute in the family after ſuch impudence?

Sir Sol. Hold, my dear—for if this ſhould be the man that is to marry her—you know there may be no harm done yet.

Wiſh. Yes, it was he indeed, Madam.

Sir Sol. [*Aſide.*] I muſt not let the jade be turn'd away, for fear ſhe ſhould put it in my wife's head, that I hid myſelf to diſcover her ladyſhip, and then the devil wou'd not be able to live in the houſe with her.

Wiſh. Now, ſir, you know what I can tell of you.

[*Aſide to* Sir Solomon.

Sir Sol. Mum! that's a good girl! there's a guinea for you.

Lady Sad. Well, upon your interceſſion, my dear, I'll pardon her this fault; but pray, miſtreſs, let me hear of no more ſuch doings. I am ſo diſorder'd with this fright——fetch my prayer-book, I'll endeavour to compoſe myſelf. [*Exit* Lady Sadlife.

Sir Sol. Ay, do ſo! that's my good dear—What two bleſſed eſcapes I have had! to find myſelf no cuckold at laſt, and, which had been equally terrible, my wife not know I wrongfully ſuſpected her.—Well! at length I am fully convinc'd of her virtue—and now if I can but cut off the abominable expence that attends ſome of her impertinent acquaintance, I ſhall ſhew myſelf a Machiavel.

Re-enter Wiſhwell.

Wiſh. Sir, here's my Lady Dainty come to wait upon my lady.

Sir Sol. I'm ſorry for't with all my heart——why did you ſay ſhe was within?

Wiſh.

Wiſh. Sir, ſhe did not aſk if ſhe was; but ſhe's never deny'd to her.

Sir Sol. Gad ſo! why then, if you pleaſe to leave her ladyſhip to me, I'll begin with her now.

Wiſhwell *brings in* Lady Dainty.

Lady D. Sir Solomon, your very humble ſervant.

Sir Sol. Yours, yours, madam.

Lady D. Where's my lady?

Sir Sol. Where your ladyſhip very ſeldom is——at prayers.

Enter Lady Sadlife.

Lady Sad. My dear Lady Dainty!

Lady D. Dear madam, I am the happieſt perſon alive in finding your ladyſhip at home.

Sir Sol. So! now for a torrent of impertinence.

Lady Sad. Your ladyſhip does me a great deal of honour.

Lady D. I am ſure I do myſelf a great deal of pleaſure: I have made at leaſt twenty viſits to-day: O! I'm quite dead! not but my coach is very eaſy—yet ſo much perpetual motion—you know.

Sir Sol. Ah, pox of your diſorder——if I had the providing your equipage, ods-zooks you ſhould rumble to your viſits in a wheel-barrow. [*Aſide.*

Lady Sad. Was you at my Lady Ducheſs's?

Lady D. A little while.

Lady Sad. Had ſhe a great circle?

Lady D. Extreme—I was not able to bear the breath of ſo much company.

Lady Sad. You did not dine there?

Lady D. Oh! I can't touch any body's dinner but my own—and I have almoſt kill'd myſelf this week for want of my uſual glaſs of Tokay after my Ortolans, and Muſcovy duck-eggs.

Sir Sol. 'Sbud, if I had the feeding of you, I'd bring you in a fortnight to neck-beef, and a pot of plain bub. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. Then I have been ſo ſurfeited with the ſight of a hideous entertainment to-day at my Lady Cormorant's, who knows no other happineſs, or way of making one welcome, than eating or drinking; for though ſhe ſaw I was juſt fainting at her vaſt limbs of butcher's meat—yet the civil ſavage forc'd me to ſit down, and heap'd

heap'd enough upon my plate to victual a fleet for an Eaſt-India voyage.

Lady Sad. How cou'd you bear it? Ha! ha! Does your ladyſhip never go to the play?

Lady D. Never but when I beſpeak it myſelf, and then not to mind the actors; for it's common to love ſights: my great diverſion is in a repos'd poſture to turn my eyes upon the galleries, and bleſs myſelf to hear the happy ſavages laugh—or when an aukward citizen crowds herſelf in among us—'tis an unſpeakable pleaſure to contemplate her airs and dreſs—And they never 'ſcape me—for I am as apprehenſive of ſuch a creature's coming near me, as ſome people are when a cat is in the room—but the play is begun, I believe, and if your ladyſhip has an inclination, I'll wait upon you.

Lady Sad. I think, madam, we can't do better; and here comes Mr. Careleſs moſt opportunely to ſquire us—

Sir Sol. Careleſs! I don't know him, but my wife does, and that's as well!

Enter Careleſs.

Care. Ladies, your ſervant—ſeeing your coach at the door, madam, made me not able to reſiſt this opportunity to——to——you know, madam, there's no time to be loſt in love. Sir Solomon, your ſervant——

Sir Sol. O yours! yours, ſir! A very impudent fellow, and I'm in hopes will marry her. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. The aſſurance of this creature almoſt grows diverting; all one can do, can't make him the leaſt ſenſible of a diſcouragement.

Lady Sad. Try what compliance will do; perhaps that may fright him.

Lady D. If it were not too dear a remedy—one wou'd almoſt do any thing to get rid of his company.

Care. Which you never will, madam, till you marry me, depend upon't: do that and I'll trouble you no more.

Sir Sol. This fellow's abominable! He'll certainly have her. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. There's no depending upon your word, or elſe I might: for the laſt time I ſaw you, you told me then you would trouble me no more.

Care. Ay, that's true, Madam; but to keep one's word, you know, looks like a tradeſman.

Sir Sol. Impudent rogue! but he'll have her—[*Aſide.*

Care.

Care. And is as much below a gentleman as paying one's debts.

Sir Sol. If he is not hang'd firſt—— [*Aſide.*

Care. Beſides, madam; I conſider'd that my abſence might endanger your conſtitution, which is ſo very tender, that nothing but love can ſave it, and ſo I wou'd e'en adviſe you to throw away your juleps, your cordials, and ſlops, and take me all at once.

Lady D. No, ſir, bitter potions are not to be taken ſo ſuddenly.

Care. Oh! to chooſe, madam; for if you ſtand making of faces, and kicking againſt it, you'll but increaſe your averſion, and delay the cure. Come, come, you muſt be advis'd. [*Preſſing her.*

Lady D. What mean you, ſir?

Care. To baniſh all your ails, and be myſelf your univerſal medicine.

Sir Sol. Well ſaid! he'll have her. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. Impudent robuſt man; I proteſt, did not I know his family, I ſhou'd think his parents had not liv'd in chairs and coaches, but had us'd their limbs all their lives! Huh! huh! but I begin to be perſuaded health is a great bleſſing. [*Aſide.*

Care. My limbs, madam, were convey'd to me before the uſe of chairs and coaches, and it might leſſen the dignity of my anceſtors, not to uſe them as they did.

Lady D. Was ever ſuch a rude underſtanding? to value himſelf upon the barbariſm of his fore-fathers.—— Indeed I have heard of kings that were bred to the plough, and I fancy you might deſcend from ſuch a race; for you court as if you were behind one——Huh! huh! huh! To treat a woman of quality like an Exchange-wench, and expreſs your paſſion with your arms; unpoliſh'd man!

Care. I was willing, madam, to take from the vulgar the only deſirable thing among 'em, and ſhew you—how they live ſo healthy—for they have no other remedy.

Lady D. A very rough medicine! hugh! hugh!

Care. To thoſe that never took it, it may ſeem ſo—

Lady D. Abandon'd raviſher! Oh! [*Struggling.*

Sir Sol. He has her, he has her. [*Aſide.*

Lady D. Leave the room, and ſee my face no more.

Care. [*Bows and is going.*]

Lady D. And, hark ye, ſir, no bribe, no mediations to my woman.

Care.

Care. [*Bows and sighs.*]

Lady D. Thou profligate! to hug! to clasp! to embrace and throw your robust arms about me, like a vulgar, and indelicate! Oh! I faint with apprehension of so gross an address. [*She faints, and* Care. *catches her.*

Care. O my offended fair!

Lady D. Inhuman! ravisher! oh!

[Care. *carries her off.*

Sir Sol. He has her! she's undone! He has her.

[*Ex.* Sir Sol. *and* Lady Sad.

Enter Clarinda *and* Sylvia.

Clar. Well, cousin, what do you think of your gentleman now?

Syl. I fancy, madam, that wou'd be as proper a question to ask you: for really I don't see any great reason to alter my opinion of him yet——

Clar. Now I cou'd dash her at once, and shew it her under his own hand that his name's Standfast, and he'll be here in a quarter of an hour. [*Aside.*] I vow I don't think I ought to refuse you any service in my power; therefore if you think it worth your while not to be out of countenance when the colonel comes, I would advise you to withdraw now; for if you dare take his own word for it, he will be here in three minutes, as this may convince you. [*Gives a letter.*

Syl. What's here? a letter from Colonel Standfast? ——Really, cousin, I have nothing to say to him—— Mr. Freeman's the person I'm concern'd for, and I expect to see him here in a quarter of an hour.

Clar. Then you don't believe them both the same person?

Syl. Not by their hands or style, I can assure you, as this may convince you. [*Gives a letter.*

Clar. Ha! The hand is different indeed————I scarce know what to think, and yet I'm sure my eyes were not deceiv'd.

Syl. Come, cousin, let's be a little cooler; 'tis not impossible but we may have both laugh'd at one another to no purpose—for I am confident they are two persons.

Clar. I can't tell that, but I'm sure here comes one of 'em.

Enter Atall *as* Colonel Standfast.

Syl. Ha!

At.

At. Hey! Bombard, (there they are, faith!) bid the chariot set up, and call again about one or two in the morning——You see, madam, what 'tis to give an impudent fellow the least encouragement: I'm resolv'd now to make a night on't with you.

Clar. I am afraid, colonel, we shall have much ado to be good company, for we are two women to one man, you see; and if we shou'd both have a fancy to have you particular, I doubt you'd make but bungling work on't.

At. I warrant you we will pass our time like gods: two ladies and one man; the prettiest set for Ombre in the universe——Come! come! Cards! cards! cards! and tea, that I insist upon.

Clar. Well, sir, if my cousin will make one, I won't balk your good-humour. [*Turning* Syl. *to face him.*

At. Is the lady your relation, madam?——I beg the honour to be known to her.

Clar. O, sir! that I'm sure she can't refuse you——Cousin, this is Colonel Standfast. [*Laughs aside.*] I hope now she's convinc'd.

At. Your pardon, madam, if I am a little particular in my desire to be known to any of this lady's relations. [*Salutes.*

Syl. You'll certainly deserve mine, sir, by being always particular to that lady——

At. Oh, madam! Tall, lall. [*Turns away, and sings.*

Syl. This assurance is beyond example. [*Aside.*

Clar. How do you do, cousin?

Syl. Beyond bearing—but not incurable. [*Aside.*

Clar. [*Aside*] Now can't I find in my heart to give him one angry word for his impudence to me this morning; the pleasure of seeing my rival mortified makes me strangely good-natur'd.

At. [*Turning familiarly to* Clar.] Upon my soul you are provokingly handsome to-day. Ay Gad! why is not it high treason for any beautiful woman to marry?

Clar. What, wou'd you have us lead apes?

At. Not one of you by all that's lovely.——Do you think we cou'd not find you better employment? Death! what a hand is here?——Gad! I shall grow foolish!

Clar. Stick to your assurance, and you are in no danger.

At. Why then, in obedience to your commands, prithee

prithee answer me sincerely one question? How long do you really design to make me dangle thus?

Clar. Why really I can't just set you a time; but when you are weary of your service, come to me with a six-pence and modesty, and I'll give you a discharge.

At. Thou insolent, provoking, handsome tyrant!

Clar. Come! let me go——this is not a very civil way of entertaining my cousin, methinks.

At. I beg her pardon indeed. [*Bowing to* Sylv.] But lovers you know, madam, may plead a sort of excuse for being singular when the favourite fair's in company. ——But we were talking of cards, ladies.

Clar. Cousin, what say you?

Syl. I had rather you would excuse me, I am a little unfit for play at this time.

At. What a valuable virtue is assurance! Now am I as intrepid as a lawyer at the bar. [*Aside.*

Clar. Bless me! you are not well?

Syl. I shall be presently——Pray, sir, give me leave to ask you a question.

At. So, now it's coming. [*Aside.*] Freely, madam.

Syl. Look on me well: have you never seen my face before?

At. Upon my word, madam, I can't recollect that I have.

Syl. I am satisfied.

At. But pray, madam, why may you ask?

Syl. I am too much disorder'd now to tell you——But if I'm not deceiv'd, I'm miserable. [*Weeps.*

At. This is strange—How her concern transports me!

Clar. Her fears have touch'd me, and half persuade me to revenge 'em——Come, cousin, be easy: I see you are convinc'd he is the same, and now I'll prove myself a friend.

Syl. I know not what to think——my senses are confounded: their features are indeed the same; and yet there's something in their air, their dress, and manner, strangely different: but be it as it will, all right to him in presence I disclaim, and yield to you for ever.

At. O charming! joyful grief! [*Aside.*

Clar. No, cousin, believe it, both our senses cannot be deceiv'd, he's individually the same; and since he dares be base to you, he's miserable indeed, if flatter'd

with a distant hope of me; I know his person and his falshood both too well; and you shall see will, as becomes your friend, resent it.

At. What means this strangeness, madam?

Clar. I'll tell you, sir; and to use few words, know then, this lady and myself have borne your faithless insolence and artifice too long: but that you may not think to impose on me, at least, I desire you would leave the house, and from this moment never see me more.

At. Madam! What! what is all this? Riddle me riddle me re,

For the Devil take me,
For ever from thee,
If I can divine what this riddle *can be!*

Syl. Not mov'd! I'm more amaz'd.

At. Pray, madam, in the name of common sense, let me know in two words what the real meaning of your last terrible speech was; and if I don't make you a plain, honest, reasonable answer to it, be pleas'd the next minute to blot my name out of your table-book, never more to be inroll'd in the senseless catalogue of those vain coxcombs, that impudently hope to come into your favour.

Clar. This insolence grows tedious: what end can you propose by this assurance? ——

At. Hey-dey!

Syl. Hold, cousin —— one moment's patience: I'll send this minute again to Mr. Freeman, and if he does not immediately appear, the dispute will need no farther argument.

At. Mr. Freeman! Who the Devil's he! What have I to do with him?

Syl. I'll soon inform you, sir.

[*Going, meets* Wishwell *entering.*

Wish. Madam, here's a footman mightily out of breath, says he belongs to Mr. Freeman, and desires very earnestly to speak with you.

Syl. Mr. Freeman! Pray bid him come in——What can this mean?

At. You'll see presently. [*Aside.*

Re-enter Wishwell *with* Finder.

Clar. Ha!

Syl. Come hither, friend; Do you belong to Mr. Freeman?

Fin. Yes, madam, and my poor maſter gives his humble ſervice to your ladyſhip, and begs your pardon for not waiting on you according to his promiſe; which he would certainly have done, but for an unfortunate accident.

Syl. What's the matter?

Fin. As he was coming out of his lodgings to pay his duty to you, madam, a parcel of fellows ſet upon him, and ſaid they had a warrant againſt him; and ſo, becauſe the raſcals began to be ſaucy with him, and my maſter knowing he did not owe a ſhilling in the world, he drew to defend himſelf, and in the ſcuffle the bloody villains run one of their ſwords quite through his arm; but the beſt of the jeſt was, madam, that as ſoon as they got him into a houſe, and ſent for a ſurgeon, he prov'd to be the wrong perſon; for their warrant it ſeems was againſt a poor ſcoundrel, that happens, they ſay, to be very like him, one Colonel Standfaſt.

At. Say you ſo, Mr. Dog——if your maſter had been here I wou'd have given him as much.

[*Gives him a box on the ear.*

Fin. O Lord! pray, madam, ſave me — I did not ſpeak a word to the gentleman——O the Devil! this muſt be the Devil in the likeneſs of my maſter.

Syl. Is this gentleman ſo very like him, ſay you?

Fin. Like, madam! ay, as one box of the ear is to another; only I think, madam, my maſter's noſe is a little, little higher.

At. Now, ladies, I preſume the riddle's ſolved—Hark you, where is your maſter, raſcal?

Fin. Maſter, raſcal! Sir, my maſter's name's Freeman, and I'm a free-born Engliſhman; and I muſt tell you, ſir, that I don't uſe to take ſuch arbitrary ſocks of the face from any man that does not pay me wages; and ſo my maſter will tell you too when he comes, ſir.

Syl. Will he be here then?

Fin. This minute, madam, he only ſtays to have his wound dreſs'd.

At. I'm reſolv'd I'll ſtay that minute out, if he does not come till midnight.

Fin. A pox of his mettle—when his hand's in he makes no difference between jeſt and earneſt, I find — if he does not pay me well for this, 'egad he ſhall tell the next for himſelf. [*Aſide.*] Has your ladyſhip any commands to my maſter madam ?

Syl. Yes, pray give him my humble ſervice, ſay I'm ſorry for his misfortune ; and if he thinks 'twill do his wound no harm, I beg by all means he may be brought hither immediately.

Fin. 'Shah! his wound, madam, I know he does not value it of a ruſh ; for he'll have the Devil and all of actions againſt the rogues for falſe impriſonment, and ſmart-money —— Ladies, I kiſs your hands —— ſir, I —— nothing at all——— [*Exit.*

At. [*Aſide.*] The dog has done it rarely ; for a lye upon the ſtretch I don't know a better raſcal in Europe.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Ay! now I'm ſure I'm right——Is not your name Colonel Standfaſt, ſir ?

At. Yes, ſir ; what then ?

Off. Then you are my priſoner, ſir———

At. Your priſoner! who the devil are you ? a bailiff? I don't owe a ſhilling.

Off. I don't care if you don't, ſir ; I have a warrant againſt you for high treaſon, and I muſt have you away this minute.

At. Look you, ſir, depend upon't, this is but ſome impertinent malicious proſecution : you may venture to ſtay a quarter of an hour, I'm ſure ; I have ſome buſineſs here till then that concerns me nearer than my life —.

Clar. Have but ſo much patience, and I'll ſatisfy you for your civility.

Off. I cou'd not ſtay a quarter of an hour, madam, if you'd give me five hundred pounds.

Syl. Can't you take bail, ſir ?

Off. Bail! no! no!

Clar. Whither muſt he be carried ?

Off. To my houſe, 'till he's examin'd before the council.

Clar. Where is your houſe ?

Off. Juſt by the ſecretary's office ; every body knows Mr. Lockum the meſſenger—Come, ſir.

At. I can't ſtir yet, indeed, ſir.

[*Lays his hand on his ſword.*

Off. Nay, look you, if you are for that play —— Come in, gentlemen, away with him.

[*Enter muſqueteers, and force him off.*

Syl. This is the ſtrangeſt accident: I am extremely ſorry for the colonel's misfortune, but I am as heartily glad he is not Mr. Freeman.

Clar. I'm afraid you'll find him ſo—— I ſhall never change my opinion of him 'till I ſee 'em face to face.

Syl. Well, couſin, let 'em be two, or one, I'm reſolv'd to ſtick to Mr. Freeman; for to tell you the truth, this laſt ſpark has too much of the confident rake in him to pleaſe me, but there is a modeſt ſincerity in t'other's converſation that's irreſiſtible.

Clar. For my part I'm almoſt tir'd with his impertinence either way, and cou'd find in my heart to trouble myſelf no more about him; and yet methinks it provokes me to have a fellow outface my ſenſes.

Syl. Nay, they are ſtrangely alike I own; but yet if you obſerve nicely, Mr. Freeman's features are more pale and penſive than the colonel's.

Clar. When Mr. Freeman comes, I'll be cloſer in my obſervation of him—— in the mean time let me conſider what I really propoſe by all this rout I make about him: ſuppoſe (which I can never believe) they ſhould prove two ſeveral men at laſt, I don't find that I'm fool enough to think of marrying either of 'em; nor (whatever airs I give myſelf) am I yet mad enough to do worſe with 'em — Well! ſince I don't deſign to come to a cloſe engagement myſelf, then why ſhould I not generouſly ſtand out of the way, and make room for one that wou'd? No, I can't do that neither — I want methinks to convict him firſt of being one and the ſame perſon, and then to have him convince my couſin that he likes me better than her—Ay, that wou'd do! and to confeſs my infirmity, I ſtill find (though I don't care for this fellow) while ſhe has aſſurance to nouriſh the leaſt hope of getting him from me, I ſhall never be heartily eaſy 'till ſhe's heartily mortified. [*Aſide.*

Syl. You ſeem very much concern'd for the colonel's misfortune, couſin.

Clar. His misfortunes ſeldom hold him long, as you may ſee; for here he comes.

Enter Atall, *as* Mr. Freeman.

Syl. Bleſs me!

At. I am ſorry, madam, I cou'd not be more punctual to your obliging commands: but the accident that prevented my coming ſooner, will, I hope, now give me a pretence to a better welcome than my laſt; for now, madam, [*to* Clar.] your miſtake's ſet right, I preſume, and I hope you won't expect Mr. Freeman to anſwer for all the miſcarriages of Colonel Standfaſt.

Clar. Not in the leaſt, ſir: the colonel's able to anſwer for himſelf, I find! ha! ha!

At. Was not my ſervant with you, madam?

[*To* Sylvia.

Syl. Yes, yes, ſir, he has told us all. [*Aſide.*] And I am ſorry you have paid ſo dear for a proof of your innocence: come, come, I'd adviſe you to ſet your heart at reſt; for what I deſign, you'll find, I ſhall come to a ſpeedy reſolution in.

At. O generous reſolution!

Clar. Well, madam, ſince you are ſo tenacious of your conqueſt, I hope you'll give me the ſame liberty; and not expect, the next time you fall a crying at the colonel's gallantry to me, that my good-nature ſhou'd give you up my pretenſions to him. And for you, ſir,—I ſhall only tell you, this laſt plot was not ſo cloſely laid, but that a woman of a very ſlender capacity, you'll find, has wit enough to diſcover it. [*Exit* Clar.

At. So! ſhe's gone to the meſſenger's, I ſuppoſe—but, poor ſoul, her intelligence there will be extremely ſmall. [*Aſide.*] Well, madam, I hope at laſt your ſcruples are over.

Syl. You can't blame me, ſir, if, now we are alone, I own myſelf a little more ſurpris'd at her poſitiveneſs, than my Woman's pride wou'd let me confeſs before her face; and yet methinks there's a native honeſty in your look, that tells me I am not miſtaken, and may truſt you with my heart.

At. O! for pity ſtill preſerve that tender thought, and ſave me from deſpair.

Enter Clerimont.

Cler. Ha! Freeman again! is it poſſible?

At. How now, Clerimont, what are you ſurpris'd at?

Cler. Why to ſee thee almoſt in two places at one

time; 'tis but this minute, I met the very image of thee with the mob about a coach, in the hands of a meſſenger, whom I had the curioſity to ſtop and call to; and had no other proof of his not being thee, but that the ſpark wou'd not know me!

Syl. Strange! I almoſt think I'm really not deceiv'd.

Cler. 'Twas certainly Clarinda I ſaw go out in a chair juſt now——it muſt be ſhe——the circumſtances are too ſtrong for a miſtake. [*Aſide.*

Syl. Well, ſir, to eaſe you of your fears, now I dare own to you, that mine are over. [*To Atall.*

Cler. What a coxcomb have I made myſelf, to ſerve my rival e'en with my own miſtreſs? but 'tis at leaſt ſome eaſe to know him: all I have to hope is, that he does not know the aſs he has made of me—that might indeed be fatal to him. [*Aſide.*

Enter Sylvia's *Maid.*

Maid. O, madam, I'm glad I've found you: your father and I have been hunting you all the town over.

Syl. My father in town?

Maid. He waits below in the coach for you: he muſt needs have you come away this minute; and talks of having you married this very night to the fine gentleman he ſpoke to you of.

Syl. What do I hear?

At. If ever ſoft compaſſion touch'd your ſoul, give me a word of comfort in this laſt diſtreſs, to ſave me from the horrors that ſurround me.

Syl. You ſee we are obſerv'd——but yet depend upon my faith, as on my life——in the mean time, I'll uſe my utmoſt power to avoid my father's haſty will: In two hours you ſhall know my fortune and my family ——Now don't follow me, as you'd preſerve my friendſhip. Come—— [*Exit with maid.*

At. Death! how this news alarms me! I never felt the pains of love before.

Cler. Now then to eaſe, or to revenge my fears—— This ſudden change of your countenance, Mr. Atall, looks as if you had a mind to banter your friend into a belief of your being really in love with the lady that juſt now left you.

At. Faith, Clerimont, I have too much concern upon me at this time, to be capable of a banter.

Cler.

Cler. Ha! he ſeems really touch'd, and I begin now only to fear Clarinda's conduct——Well, ſir, if it be ſo, I'm glad to ſee a convert of you; and now, in return to the little ſervices I have done you, in helping you to carry on your affair with both theſe ladies at one time, give me leave to aſk a favour of you——Be ſtill ſincere, and we may ſtill be friends.

At. You ſurpriſe me—but uſe me as you find me.

Cler. Have you no acquaintance with a certain lady whom you have lately heard me own I was unfortunately in love with?

At. Not that I know of, I'm ſure not as the lady you are in love with: but pray, why do you aſk?

Cler. Come, I'll be ſincere with you too: becauſe I have ſtrong circumſtances, that convince me 'tis one of thoſe two you have been ſo buſy about.

At. Not ſhe you ſaw me with, I hope?

Cler. No; I mean the other—But to clear the doubt at once, is her name Clarinda?

At. I own it is: but had I the leaſt been warn'd of your pretences——

Cler. Sir, I dare believe you; and though you may have prevail'd even againſt her honour, your ignorance of my paſſion for her makes you ſtand at leaſt excus'd to me.

At. No; by all the ſolemn proteſtations tongue can utter, her honour is untainted yet for me; nay, even unattempted: 'Nor had I ever an opportunity, that cou'd 'encourage the moſt diſtant thought againſt it.'

Cler. You own ſhe has receiv'd your gallantries at leaſt!

At. Faith, not to be vain, ſhe has indeed taken ſome pains to pique her couſin about me; and if her beautiful couſin had not fallen in my way at the ſame time, I muſt own, 'tis very poſſible, I might have endeavour'd to puſh my fortune with her; but ſince I now know your heart, put my friendſhip to a trial.

Cler. Only this—If I ſhou'd be reduc'd to aſk it of you, promiſe to confeſs your impoſture, and your paſſion to her couſin, before her face.

At. There's my hand,—I'll do't, to right my friend and miſtreſs. But, dear Clerimont, you'll pardon me, if

I leave you here: for my poor Incognita's affairs at this time are in a very critical condition.

Cler. No ceremony—I releaſe you.—

At. Adieu. *Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Clerimont *and* Careleſs.

Cler. AND ſo you took the opportunity of her fainting to carry her off! Pray, how long did her fit laſt?

Care. Why, faith, I ſo humour'd her affectation, that 'tis hardly over yet; for I told her, her life was in danger, and ſwore, if ſhe wou'd not let me ſend for a parſon to marry her before ſhe dy'd, I'd that minute ſend for a ſhroud, and be buried alive with her in the ſame coffin: but at the apprehenſion of ſo terrible a thought, ſhe pretended to be frightened into her right ſenſes again; and forbid me her ſight for ever.—So that in ſhort, my impudence is almoſt exhauſted, her affectation is as unſurmountable as another's real virtue, and I muſt e'en catch her that way, or die without her at laſt.

Cler. How do you mean?

Care. Why, if I find I can't impoſe upon her by humility, which I'll try, I'll e'en turn rival to myſelf in a very fantaſtical figure, that I'm ſure ſhe won't be able to reſiſt, &c. You muſt know ſhe has of late been flatter'd that the Muſcovite Prince Alexander is dying for her, though he never ſpoke to her in his life.

Cler. I underſtand you: ſo you'd firſt venture to pique her againſt you, and then let her marry you in another perſon, to be reveng'd of you.

Care. One of the two ways I am pretty ſure to ſucceed.

Cler. Extravagant enough! Pr'ythee, is Sir Solomon in the next room?

Care. What, you want his aſſiſtance? Clarinda's in her airs again!

Cler. Faith, Careleſs, I am almoſt aſham'd to tell you, but I muſt needs ſpeak with him.

Care. Come along then. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady Dainty, Lady Sadlife, *and* Careleſs.

Lady D. This rude boiſterous man has given me a thouſand diſorders; the colic, the ſpleen, the palpitation of the heart, and convulſions all over—Huh! huh! —I muſt ſend for the doctor. *Lady*

Lady Sad. Come, come, madam, e'en pardon him, and let him be your phyſician—do but obſerve his penitence, ſo humble he dares not ſpeak to you.

Care. [*Folds his arms and ſighs.*] Oh!

Lady Sad. How can you hear him ſigh ſo?

Lady D. Nay, let him groan—for nothing but his pangs can eaſe me.

Care. [*Kneels and preſents her his drawn ſword; opening his breaſt.*] Be then at once moſt barbarouſly juſt, and take your vengeance here.

Lady D. No, I give thee life to make thee miſerable; live, that my reſenting eyes may kill thee every hour.

Care. Nay then, there's no relief but——this——

[*Offering at his ſword,* Lady Sadlife *holds him.*

Lady Sad. Ah! for mercy's ſake—barbarous creature, how can you ſee him thus?

Lady D. Why, I did not bid him kill himſelf: but do you really think he wou'd ha' don't?

Lady Sad. Certainly, if I had not prevented it.

Lady D. Strange paſſion! But 'tis its nature to be violent, when one makes it deſpair.

Lady Sad. Won't you ſpeak to him?

Lady D. No, but if your—is enough concern'd to be his friend, you may tell him—not that it really is ſo—but you may ſay—you believe I pity him.

Lady Sad. Sure love was never more ridiculous on both ſides.

Enter Wiſhwell.

Wiſh. Madam, here's a page from Prince Alexander, deſires to give a letter into your ladyſhip's own hands.

Lady D. Prince Alexander! what means my heart? I come to him.

Lady Sad. By no means, madam, pray let him come in.

Care. Ha! Prince Alexander! nay, then I have found out the ſecret of this coldneſs, madam.

Enter Page.

Page. Madam, his Royal Highneſs Prince Alexander, my maſter, has commanded me, on pain of death, thus [*Kneeling.*] to deliver this, the burning ſecret of his heart.

Lady D. Where is the Prince?

Page. Repos'd in private on a mourning pallat, 'till your commands vouchſafe to raiſe him.

Lady Sad. By all means, receive him here immediately.

diately. I have the honour to be a little known to his highneſs.

Lady D. The favour, madam, is too great to be reſiſted: Pray tell his highneſs then, the honour of the viſit he deſigns me, makes me thankful and impatient! huh! huh! [*Exit Page.*

Care. Are my ſufferings, madam, ſo ſoon forgot then! Was I but flatter'd with the hope of pity?

Lady D. The happy have whole days, and thoſe they chooſe. [*Reſenting.*] The unhappy have but hours, and thoſe they loſe. [*Exit repeating.*

Lady Sad. Don't you loſe a minute then.

Care. I'll warrant you—ten thouſand thanks, dear madam, I'll be transform'd in a ſecond ——

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

Enter Clarinda *in man's habit.*

Clar. So! I'm in for't now! how I ſhall come off I can't tell: 'twas but a bare ſaving game I made with Clerimont; his reſentment had brought my pride to its laſt legs, diſſembling: and if the poor man had not lov'd me too well, I had made but a diſmal humble figure—I have us'd him ill, that's certain, and he may e'en thank himſelf for't—he would be ſincere.—Well, (begging my ſex's pardon) we do make the ſillieſt tyrants—we had better be reaſonable; for (to do 'em right) we don't run half the hazard in obeying the good-ſenſe of a lover; at leaſt, I'm reduc'd now to make the experiment—Here they come.

Enter Sir Solomon *and* Clerimont.

Sir Sol. What have we here! another captain? If I were ſure he were a coward now, I'd kick him before he ſpeaks——Is your buſineſs with me, ſir?

Clar. If your name be Sir Solomon Sadlife.

Sir Sol. Yes, ſir, it is, and I'll maintain it, as ancient as any, and related to moſt of the families in England.

Clar. My buſineſs will convince you, ſir, that I think well of it.

Sir Sol. And what is your buſineſs, ſir?

Clar. Why, ſir—you have a pretty kinſwoman call'd Clarinda.

Cler. Ha!

Sir Sol. And what then, ſir—ſuch a rogue as t'other.

[*Aſide.*

Clar.

Clar. Now, sir, I have seen her, and am in love with her.

Cler. Say you so, sir!—I may chance to cure you of it. [*Aside.*

Clar. And to back my pretensions, sir, I have a good fifteen hundred pounds a-year estate, and am, as you see, a pretty fellow into the bargain.

Sir Sol. She that marries you, sir, will have a choice bargain indeed.

Clar. In short, sir, I'll give you a thousand guineas to make up the match.

Sir Sol. Hum—[*Aside.*] But, sir, my niece is provided for.

Cler. That's well. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. But if she were not, sir, I must tell you, she is not to be caught with a smock face and a feather, sir—and——and——let me see you an hour hence. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well said, uncle. [*Aside.*]——But, sir, I'm in love with her, and positively will have her.

Sir Sol. Whether she likes you or no, sir?

Clar. Like me! ha! ha! I'd fain see a woman that dislikes a pretty fellow with fifteen hundred pounds a-year, a white wig, and black eye-brows.

Cler. Hark you, young gentleman, there must go more than all this to the gaining of that lady.

[*Takes* Clarinda *aside.*

Sir Sol. [*Aside.*] A thousand guineas! that's five hundred more than I proposed to get of Mr. Clerimont—but my honour is engag'd——Ay, but then here's a thousand pounds to release it———Now shall I take the money? It must be so——coin will carry it.

Clar. Oh, sir, if that be all, I'll soon remove your doubts and pretensions—Come, sir, I'll try your courage.

Cler. I am afraid you won't, young gentleman.

Clar. As young as I am, sir, you shall find I scorn to turn my back to any man.———

[*Exeunt* Clarinda *and* Clerimont.

Sir Sol. Ha! they are gone to fight—with all my heart—a fair chance at least for a better bargain: for if the young spark shou'd let the air into my friend Clerimont's midriff now, it may possibly cool his love too, and then there's my honour safe, and a thousand guineas snug. [*Exit.*

'*Enter* Lady Dainty, Lady Sadlife, *and* Careleſs, *as* 'Prince Alexander.

'*Lady D.* Your highneſs, ſir, has done me honour 'in this viſit.

'*Care.* Madam—— [*Salutes her.*

'*Lady D.* A captivating perſon!

'*Care.* May the days be taken from my life, and 'added to yours!———moſt incomparable beauty! 'whiter than the ſnow that lies about the year unmelted 'on our Ruſſian mountains.

'*Lady D.* How manly his expreſſions are——we are 'extremely oblig'd to the Czar for not taking your 'highneſs home with him.

'*Care.* He left me, madam, to learn to be a ſhip-'carpenter.

'*Lady Sad.* A very politic accompliſhment!

'*Lady D.* And in a prince entirely new.

'*Care.* All his nobles, madam, are maſters of ſome 'uſeful ſcience, and moſt of our arms are quarter'd with 'mechanical inſtruments, as hatchets, hammers, pick-'axes, and hand-ſaws.

'*Lady D.* I admire the manly manners of your court.

'*Lady Sad.* Oh! ſo infinitely beyond the ſoft idle-'neſs of ours.

'*Care.* 'Tis the faſhion, ladies, for the eaſtern 'princes to profeſs ſome trade or other———The laſt 'Grand Signor was a lockſmith.

'*Lady D.* How new his converſation is!

'*Care.* Too rude, I fear, madam, for ſo tender a 'compoſition as your divine ladyſhip's.

'*Lady D.* Courtly to a ſoftneſs too!

'*Care.* Were it poſſible, madam, that ſo much deli-'cacy cou'd endure the martial roughneſs of our man-'ners and our country, I cannot boaſt; but if a pro-'vince at your feet cou'd make you mine, that province 'and its maſter ſhou'd be yours.

'*Lady D.* Ay! here's grandeur with addreſs; an 'odious native lover now, wou'd have complained of 'the taxes, perhaps, and have haggled with one for a 'ſcanty jointure out of his horrid lead-mines, in ſome 'uninhabitable mountains, about an hundred and four-'ſcore miles from unheard-of London.

'*Care.* I am inform'd, madam, there is a certain poor 'diſtracted

'distracted Englifh fellow, that refus'd to quit his faucy 'pretenfions to your all-conquering beauty, though he 'had heard I had myfelf refolv'd to adore you. Care-'lefs, I think they call him.

'*Lady D.* Your highnefs wrongs your merit, to give 'yourfelf the leaft concern for one fo much below your fear.

'*Care.* When I firft heard of him, I on the inftant or-'der'd one of my retinue to ftrike off his head with a 'fcimitar; but they told me the free laws of England 'allow'd of no fuch power: fo that, though I am a prince 'of the blood, madam, I am oblig'd only to murder him 'privately.

'*Lady D.* 'Tis indeed a reproach to the ill-breeding 'of our conftitution, not to admit your power with your 'perfon. But if the pain of my entire neglect can end 'him, pray be eafy.

'*Care.* Madam, I'm not revengeful; make him but 'miferable—I'm fatisfy'd.

'*Lady D.* You may depend upon't.

'*Care.* I'm in ftrange favour with her——— [*Afide.* 'Pleafe you, ladies, to make your fragrant fingers fami-'liar with this box.

'*Lady D.* Sweet, or plain, fir?

'*Care.* Right Mofco, madam, made of the fculls of 'conquer'd enemies.

'*Lady Sad.* Gunpowder, as I live! *Exeunt.*'

The SCENE *changes to a field.*

Enter Clarinda *and* Clerimont.

Cler. Come, fir, we are far enough.

Clar. I only wifh the lady were by, fir, that the conqueror might carry her off the fpot: I warrant fhe'd be mine.

Cler. That, my talking hero, we fhall foon determine.

Clar. Not that I think her handfome, or care a ruth for her.

Cler. You are very mettled, fir, to fight for a woman you don't value!

Clar. Sir, I value the reputation of a gentleman, and I don't think any young fellow ought to pretend to it 'till he has talk'd himfelf into a lampoon, loft his two or three thoufand pounds at play, kept his mifs, and kill'd his man.

Cler. Very gallant indeed, fir! but if you pleafe to handle

handle your ſword, you'll ſoon go through your courſe.

Clar. Come on, ſir——I believe I ſhall give your miſtreſs a truer account of your heart than you have done. I have had her heart long enough, and now will have your's.

Cler. Ha! does ſhe love you then?

[*Endeavouring to draw.*

Clar. I leave you to judge that, ſir. But I have lain with her a thouſand times; in ſhort, ſo long, 'till I'm tir'd of it.

Cler. Villain, thou lieſt! Draw, or I'll uſe you as you deſerve, and ſtab you.

Clar. Take this with you firſt——Clarinda will never marry him that murders me.

Cler. She may the man that vindicates her honour——therefore be quick, or I'll keep my word—I find your ſword is not for doing things in haſte.

Clar. It ſticks to the ſcabbard ſo; I believe I did not wipe off the blood of the laſt man I fought with.

Cler. Come, ſir! this trifling ſha'n't ſerve your turn: here, give me yours, and take mine.

Clar. With all my heart, ſir—Now have at you.

Cler. Death! You villain, do you ſerve me ſo!

[Cler. *draws and finds only a hilt in his hand.*

Clar. In love and war, ſir, all advantages are fair; ſo we conquer, no matter whether by force or ſtratagem: Come, quick, ſir! Your life or miſtreſs——

Cler. Neither——Death! you ſhall have both or none: Here drive your ſword; for only through this heart you reach Clarinda.

Clar. Death! ſir, can you be mad enough to die for a woman that hates you?

Cler. If that were true, 'twere greater madneſs then to live.

Clar. Why, to my knowledge, ſir, ſhe has us'd you baſely, falſely, ill, and for no reaſon.

Cler. No matter; no uſage can be worſe than the contempt of poorly, tamely parting with her——She may abuſe her heart by happy infidelities; but 'tis the pride of mine to be even miſerably conſtant.

Clar. Generous paſſion—you almoſt tempt me to reſign her to you.

Cler.

Cler. You cannot, if you wou'd——I wou'd indeed have won her fairly from you with my ſword, but ſcorn to take her as your gift. Be quick and end your inſolence.——

Clar. Yes, thus——moſt generous Clerimont——you now indeed have fairly vanquiſh'd me. [*Runs to him.*] My woman's follies and my ſhame be buried ever here.

Cler. Ha! Clarinda! is't poſſible! my wonder riſes with my joy—How came you in this habit?

Clar. Now you indeed recall my bluſhes, but I had no other veil to hide 'em, while I confeſs'd the injuries I had done your heart, in fooling with a man I never meant on any terms to engage with. Beſide, I knew from our late parting, your fear of loſing me wou'd reduce you to comply with Sir Solomon's demands, for his intereſt in your favour: Therefore, as you ſaw, I was reſolv'd to ruin his market by ſeeming to raiſe it; for he ſecretly took the offer I made him.

Cler. 'Twas generouſly and timely offer'd, for it really prevented my ſigning articles to him: but if you would heartily convince me that I ſhall never more have need of his intereſt, e'en let us ſteal to the next prieſt, and honeſtly put it out of his power ever to part us.

Clar. Why, truly conſidering the truſts I have made you, 'twou'd be ridiculous now, I think, to deny you any thing——and if you ſhou'd grow weary of me after ſuch uſage, I can't blame you.

Cler. Baniſh that fear; my flame can never waſte,
For love ſincere refines upon the taſte. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir Solomon, *with old* Mr. Willfull: Lady Sadlife, *and* Sylvia *weeping.*

Sir. Sol. Troth, my old friend, this is a bad buſineſs indeed; you have bound yourſelf in a thouſand pound bond, you ſay, to marry your daughter to a fine gentleman, and ſhe in the mean time, it ſeems, is fallen in love with a ſtranger.

Will. Look you, Sir Solomon, it does not trouble me o' this: For I'll make her do as I pleaſe, or I'll ſtarve her.

Lady Sad. But, ſir, your daughter tells me that the gentleman ſhe loves is in every degree in as good circumſtances as the perſon you deſign her for: and if he does not prove himſelf ſo before to-morrow morning, ſhe

ſhe will chearfully ſubmit to whatever you'll impoſe on her.

Will. All ſham! all ſham! only to gain time——I expect my friend and his ſon here immediately, to demand performance of articles; and if her ladyſhip's nice ſtomach does not immediately comply with 'em, as I told you before, I'll ſtarve her.

Lady Sad. But conſider, ſir, what a perpetual diſcord muſt a forc'd marriage probably produce.

Will. Diſcord! pſhaw! waw! One man makes as good a huſband as another——A month's marriage will ſet all to rights, I warrant you—you know the old ſaying, Sir Solomon, lying together makes pigs love.

Lady Sad. [*To* Sylvia.] What ſhall we do for you? there's no altering him—Did not your lover promiſe to come to your aſſiſtance?

Syl. I expect him every minute—but can't foreſee from him the leaſt hope of my redemption———This is he!

Enter Atall *undiſguiſed.*

At. My Sylvia! dry thoſe tender eyes, for while there's life there's hope.

Lady Sad. Ha! is't he? but I muſt ſmother my confuſion!

Will. How, now, ſir! Pray who gave you commiſſion to be ſo familiar with my daughter?

At. Your pardon, ſir; but when you know me right, you'll neither think my freedom or my pretenſions familiar or diſhonourable.

Will. Why, ſir, what pretenſions have you to her?

At. Sir, I ſav'd her life at the hazard of my own: That gave me a pretence to know her; knowing her made me love, and gratitude made her receive it.

Will. Ay, ſir, and ſome very good reaſons, beſt known to myſelf, make me refuſe it—Now what will you do?

At. I can't tell yet, ſir—But if you'll do me the favour to let me know thoſe reaſons——

Will. Sir, I don't think myſelf oblig'd to do either; but I'll tell you what I'll do for you, ſince you ſay you love my daughter, and ſhe loves you, I'll put you in the neareſt way to get her.

At. Don't flatter me! I beg you, ſir.

Will.

Will. Not I, upon my ſoul, ſir; for look you——'tis only this——get my conſent, and you ſhall have her.

At. I beg your pardon, ſir, for endeavouring to talk reaſon to you. But to return your rallery, give me leave to tell you, when any man marries her but myſelf, he muſt extremely aſk my conſent.

Will. Before George, thou art a very pretty impudent fellow, and I'm ſorry I can't puniſh her diſobedience by throwing her away upon thee.

At. You'll have a great deal of plague about this buſineſs, ſir; for I ſhall be mighty difficult to give up my pretenſions to her.

Will. Ha! 'tis a thouſand pities I can't comply with thee: Thou wilt certainly be a thriving fellow; for thou doſt really ſet the beſt face upon a bad cauſe that ever I ſaw ſince I was born.

At. Come, ſir—once more, rallery apart; ſuppoſe I prove myſelf of equal birth and fortune to deſerve her?

Will. Sir, if you were eldeſt ſon to the Cham of Tartary, or had the dominions of the Great Mogul entail'd upon you and your heirs for ever, it wou'd ſignify no more than the bite of my thumb——The girl's diſpos'd of, I have match'd her already upon a thouſand pounds forfeit, and faith ſhe ſhall fairly run for't, though ſhe's yerk'd and flea'd from the creſt to the crupper.

At. Confuſion!

Syl. What will become of me!

Will. And if you don't think me in earneſt now, here comes one that will convince you of my ſincerity.

At. My father! Nay then my ruin is inevitable.

Enter Sir Harry Atall.

Sir Har. [*To* At.] O ſweet ſir, have I found you at laſt! Your very humble ſervant: What's the reaſon pray, that you have had the aſſurance to be almoſt a fortnight in town, and never come near me? eſpecially when I ſent you word I had buſineſs of ſuch conſequence with you.

At. I underſtood your buſineſs was to marry me, ſir, to a woman I never ſaw; and to confeſs the truth, I durſt not come near you, becauſe I was at the ſame time in love with one you never ſaw.

Sir Har. Was you ſo, ſir——why then, ſir, I'll find a ſpeedy

a ſpeedy cure for your paſſion—Brother Willful—Hey, fiddles there!

At. You may treat me, ſir, with what ſeverity you pleaſe; but my engagements to that lady are too powerful and fix'd to let the utmoſt miſery diſſolve 'em.

Sir Har. What does the fool mean?

At. That I can ſooner die than part with her.

Will. Hey!—why, is this your ſon, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Hey-dey! why, did not you know that before?

At. O earth! and all you ſtars! is this the lady you deſign'd me, ſir?

Syl. O fortune, is it poſſible?

Sir Har. And is this the lady, ſir, you have been making ſuch a buſtle about?

At. Not life, health, or happineſs are half ſo dear to me.

Sir Sol. [*Joining* At. *and* Sylvia's *hands.*] —— loll! loll, leroll!

At. O tranſporting joy! [*Embracing* Sylvia.]

Sir Har. } [*Joining in the tune, and dancing about*
and *Will.* } *'em.*] loll! loll!

Sir Sol. Hey! within there! [*Calls the fiddles.*] by jingo we'll make a night on't.

Enter Clarinda *and* Clarimont.

Clar. Save you, ſave you, good people! I'm glad, uncle, to hear you call ſo chearfully for the fiddles, it looks as if you had a huſband ready for me.

Sir Sol. Why, that I may have by to-morrow night, madam; but in the mean time, if you pleaſe, you may wiſh your friends joy.

Clar. Dear Sylvia!

Syl. Clarinda!

At. O Clerimont, ſuch a deliverance!

Cler. Give you joy, joy, ſir.

Clar. I congratulate your happineſs—and am pleas'd our little jealouſies are over; Mr. Clerimont has told me all, and cur'd me of curioſity for ever.

Syl. What, married?

Clar. You'll ſee preſently! but, Sir Solomon, what do you mean by to-morrow? why do you fancy I have any more patience than the reſt of my neighbours?

Sir

Sir Sol. Why truly, madam, I don't ſuppoſe you have; but I believe to-morrow will be as ſoon as their buſineſs can be done, by which time I expect a jolly fox-hunter from Yorkſhire, and if you are reſolv'd not to have patience till next day, why the ſame parſon may toſs you up all four in a diſh together.

Clar. A filthy fox-hunter?

Sir Sol. Odzooks! a mettled fellow, that will ride you from day-break to ſun-ſet! none of our ſlimſy London raſcals, that muſt have a chair to carry 'em to their coach, and a coach to carry 'em to a trapes, and a conſtable to carry both to the round-houſe.

Clar. Ay, but this fox-hunter, Sir Solomon, will come home dirty and tir'd as one of his hounds, he'll be always aſleep before he's a-bed, and on horſeback before he's awake; he muſt riſe early to follow his ſport, and I ſit up late at cards for want of better diverſion——Put this together, my wiſe uncle.

Sir Sol. Are you ſo high fed, madam, that a country gentleman of fifteen hundred pounds a year won't go down with you?

Clar. Not ſo, ſir, but you really kept me ſo ſharp, that I was e'en forc'd to provide for myſelf, and here ſtands the fox-hunter for my money.

[*Claps* Cler. *on the ſhoulder.*

Sir Sol. How!

Cler. Even ſo, Sir Solomon—hark in your ear, ſir! you really held your conſent at ſo high a price, that to give you a proof of my good huſbandry I was reſolv'd to ſave charges, and e'en marry her without it.

Sir Sol. Hell! and———

Clar. And hark you in t'other ear, ſir——becauſe I wou'd not have you expoſe your reverend age by a miſtake———Know, ſir, I was the young ſpark with the ſmooth face and a feather, that offer'd you a thouſand guineas for your conſent, which you wou'd have been glad to have taken.

Sir Sol. The devil! if ever I traffick in women's fleſh again, may all the bank-ſtocks fall when I have bought 'em, and riſe when I have ſold 'em!——Hey-dey! what have we here! more cheats!

Cler. Not unlikely, ſir—for I fancy they are married.

Enter

Enter Lady Dainty *and* Careleſs.

Lady Sad. That they are, I can aſſure you—I give your highneſs joy, madam.

Lady D. Lard! that people of any rank ſhou'd uſe ſuch vulgar ſalutations—though methinks highneſs has ſomething of grandeur in the ſound. But I was in hopes, good people, that confident fellow Careleſs had been among you.

Care. What ſay you, madam, (to divert the good company) ſhall we ſend for him by way of mortification?

Lady D. By all means; for your ſake, methinks, I ought to give him full deſpair.

Care. Why then, to let you ſee, that 'tis a much eaſier thing to cure a fine lady of her fickly taſte, than a lover of his impudence—There's Careleſs for you, without the leaſt tincture of deſpair about him.

[*Diſcovers himſelf.*

All. Ha! Careleſs!

Lady D. Abus'd! undone!

All. Ha! ha!

Cler. Nay, now, madam, we wiſh you a ſuperior joy; for you have married a man, inſtead of a monſter.

Care. Come! come, madam, ſince you find you were in the power of ſuch a cheat—you may be glad it was no greater, you might have fallen into a raſcal's hands: but you know, I am a gentleman, my fortune no ſmall one, and if your temper will give me leave, will deſerve you.

Lady Sad. Come! e'en make the beſt of your fortune: for take my word, if the cheat had not been a very agreeable one, I wou'd never have had a hand in't—you muſt pardon me if I can't help laughing.

Lady D. Well! ſince it muſt be ſo, I pardon all; only one thing let me beg of you, ſir—that is, your promiſe to wear this habit one month for my ſatisfaction.

Care. O, madam! that's a trifle! I'll lie in the ſun a whole ſummer for an olive complexion, to oblige you.

Lady D. Well! Mr. Careleſs, I begin now to think better of my fortune, and look back with apprehenſion of the eſcape I have had; you have already cur'd my folly, and

nd were but my health recoverable, I ſhould think my-
elf completely happy.

Care. For that, madam, we'll venture to ſave you
octors fees,

And truſt to nature: time will ſoon diſcover,
Your beſt phyſician is a favour'd lover.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

WELL, sirs! I know not how the play may pass,
But, in my humble sense—our bard's an ass;
For, had he ever known the least of nature,
H' had found his Double Spark *a dismal creature:*
To please two ladies, he two forms puts on,
As if the thing in shadows cou'd be done:
The women really two, and he, poor soul! but one.
Had he revers'd the hint, h' had done the feat,
Had made the impostor credibly complete:
A single mistress—might have stood the cheat.
She might to several lovers have been kind,
Nor strain'd your faith, to think both pleas'd and blind.
Plain sense had known, the fair can love receive,
With half the pains your warmest vows can give.
But, hold!—I'm thinking I mistake the matter;
On second thoughts:—The hint's but honest satire;
And only meant t'expose their modish sense,
Who think the fire of love's—but impudence.
Our spark was really modest;—when he found
Two female claims at once, he one disown'd;
Wisely presuming, though in ne'er such haste,
One wou'd be found enough for him at last.
So that to sum the whole——I think the play
Deserves the usual favours on his day;
If not, he swears he'll write the next to music,
In Doggrel rhymes wou'd make or him, or you sick.
His groveling sense, Italian airs shall crown,
And then, he's sure, ev'n nonsense will go down.
But, if you'd have the world suppose the stage
Not quite forsaken in this airy age,
Let your glad votes our needless fear confound,
And speak in claps as loud for sense, as sound.

THE
INCONSTANT;
OR, THE
WAY TO WIN HIM.
A
COMEDY.

WRITTEN BY

MR. GEORGE FARQUHAR.

Marked with the Variations in the

MANAGER's BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
Corpora———————— Ovid Met.

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M.DCC.LXXVII.

☞ The Reader is desired to observe, that the passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Lines 12 and 13, Page 8.

PROLOGUE.

LIKE hungry gueſts, a ſitting audience looks;
Plays are like ſuppers: Poets are the cooks.
The founders you: the table is this place:
The carvers we: the prologue is the grace.
Each act, a courſe; each ſcene a different diſh:
Tho' we're in Lent, *I doubt you're ſtill for fleſh.*
Satire's the ſauce, high-ſeaſon'd, ſharp and rough;
Kind maſks and beaux, I hope you're pepper-proof.
Wit is the wine; but 'tis ſo ſcarce the true,
Poets, like vintners, balderdaſh and brew.
Your ſurly ſcenes, where rant and bloodſhed join,
Are butcher's meat, a battle's a ſirloin:
Your ſcenes of love, ſo flowing, ſoft and chaſte,
Are water-gruel, without ſalt or taſte.
Bawdy's fat veniſon, which tho' ſtale, can pleaſe:
Your rakes love haut-gouts, like your damn'd French *cheeſe.*
Your rarity for the fair gueſt to gape on,
Is your nice Squeaker, *or* Italian *capon*;
Or your French *virgin-pullet, garniſh'd round,*
And dreſs'd with ſauce of ſome—Four hundred pound.
An Opera, *like an* Olio, *nicks the age*;
Farce *is the haſty-pudding of the ſtage.*
For when you're treated with indifferent cheer,
You can diſpenſe with ſlender ſtage-coach fare.
A paſtoral's whipt cream; ſtage-whims, mere traſh;
And tragi-comedy, half fiſh and fleſh.
But comedy, that, that's the darling cheer;
This night we hope you'll an Inconſtant *bear:*
Wild fowl is lik'd in play-houſe all the year.
Yet ſince each mind betrays a diff'rent taſte,
And every diſh ſcarce pleaſes ev'ry gueſt,
If aught you reliſh, do not damn the reſt.
This favour crav'd, up let the muſic ſtrike:
You're welcome all—Now fall to, where you like.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.	AT COVENT-GARDEN.
Old Mirabel, *an aged Gentleman of an odd Compound, between the peeviſhneſs incident to his years, and his Fatherly fondneſs towards his Son,* — — —	Mr. SHUTER.
Young Mirabel, *his Son,*— — — — —	Mr. SMITH.
Captain Duretete, *an honeſt good-natured fellow, that thinks himſelf a greater fool than he is,* — — —	Mr. WOODWARD.
Dugard, *Brother to* Oriana, — — — —	Mr. GARDNER.
Petit, *Servant to* Dugard, *afterwards to his Siſter,* —	Mr. CUSHING.

WOMEN.	
Oriana, *a Lady contracted to* Mirabel, *who would bring him to reaſon.* — — — — — —	Mrs. LESSINGHAM.
Biſarre, *a whimſical Lady, Friend to* Oriana, *admired by* Duretete, — — — — — —	Miſs MACKLIN.
Lamorce, *a Woman of Contrivance* — — —	Mrs. OGLIRE.

Four Bravoes, two Gentlemen, and two Ladies.

Soldiers, Servants, and Attendants.

THE

INCONSTANT;

OR, THE

WAY TO WIN HIM.

ACT I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Dugard, *and his Man* Petit *in Riding Habits.*

Dug. SIRRAH, what's a clock?

Pet. Turn'd of eleven, sir.

Dug. No more! We have rid a swinging pace from *Nemours* since two this morning! *Petit*, run to *Rousseau*'s, and bespeak a dinner at a lewis d'or a head, to be ready by one.

Pet. How many will there be of you, sir?

Dug. Let me see, *Mirabel* one, *Duretete* two, myself three——

Pet. And I four.

Dug. How now, sir, at your old travelling familiarity! When abroad, you had some freedom for want

of better company; but among my friends at *Paris*, pray remember your diſtance—Begone, ſir.—— [*Exit* Petit.] This fellow's wit was neceſſary abroad, but he's too cunning for a domeſtic: I muſt diſpoſe of him ſome way elſe.—Who's here? Old *Mirabel*, and my ſiſter! my deareſt ſiſter!

Enter Old Mirabel *and* Oriana.

Ori. My brother! welcome.

Dug. Monſieur *Mirabel!* I'm heartily glad to ſee you.

Old Mir. Honeſt Mr. *Dugard*, by the blood of the *Mirabels*, I'm your moſt humble ſervant.

Dug. Why, ſir, you've caſt your ſkin ſure, you're briſk and gay, luſty health about you, no ſign of age but your ſilver hairs.

Old Mir. Silver hairs! Then they are quick-ſilver hairs, ſir. Whilſt I have golden pockets, let my hairs be ſilver an they will. Adſbud, ſir, I can dance, and ſing, and drink, and—no, I can't wench. But Mr. *Dugard*, no news of my ſon *Bob* in all your travels?

Dug. Your ſon's come home, ſir.

Old Mir. Come home! *Bob* come home! By the blood of the *Mirabels*, Mr. *Dugard*, what ſay ye?

Ori. Mr. *Mirabel* return'd, ſir.

Dug. He's certainly come, and you may ſee him within this hour or two.

Old Mir. Swear it, Mr. *Dugard*, preſently ſwear it.

Dug. Sir, he came to town with me this morning, I left him at the Bagnieurs, being a little diſorder'd after riding, and I ſhall ſee him again preſently.

Old Mir. What! and he was aſham'd to aſk a bleſſing with his boots on. A nice dog! Well, and how fares the young rogue, ha?

Dug. A fine gentleman, ſir. He'll be his own meſſenger.

Old Mir. A fine gentleman! But is the rogue like me ſtill?

Dug. Why, yes, ſir; he's very like his mother, and as like you as moſt modern ſons are to their fathers.

Old Mir. Why, ſir, don't you think that I begat him?

Dug. Why yes, ſir; you married his mother, and he inherits your eſtate. He's very like you, upon my word.

Ori.

Ori. And pray, brother, what's become of his honeſt companion, *Duretete?*

Dug. Who, the captain? The very ſame, he went abroad; he's the only *Frenchman* I ever knew that could not change. Your ſon, Mr. *Mirabel*, is more obliged to nature for that fellow's compoſition, than for his own: for he's more happy in *Duretete*'s folly than his own wit. In ſhort, they are as inſeparable as finger and thumb; but the firſt inſtance in the world, I believe, of oppoſition in friendſhip.

Old Mir. Very well; will he be home to dinner, think ye?

Dug. Sir, he has order'd me to beſpeak a dinner for us at *Rouſſeau*'s, at a lewis d'or a head.

Old Mir. A lewis d'or a head! Well ſaid, *Bob*; by the blood of the *Mirabels*, *Bob*'s improv'd. But Mr. *Dugard*, was it ſo civil of *Bob* to viſit Monſieur *Rouſſeau* before his own natural father? Eh, hark'e *Oriana*, what think you, now, of a fellow that can eat and drink ye a whole lewis d'or at a ſitting? he muſt be as ſtrong as *Hercules*, life and ſpirit in abundance. Before Gad-I don't wonder at theſe men of quality, that their own wives can't ſerve 'em. A lewis d'or a head! 'tis enough to ſtock the whole nation with baſtards, 'tis faith. Mr. *Dugard*, I leave you with your ſiſter. [*Exit.*

Dug. Well, ſiſter, I need not aſk you how you do, your looks reſolve me; fair, tall, well-ſhap'd; you're almoſt grown out of my remembrance.

Ori. Why, truly brother, I look pretty well, thank nature and my toilet; 'I have 'ſcap'd the jaundice, green-ſickneſs, and the ſmall-pox;' I eat three meals a day, am very merry when up, and ſleep ſoundly when I'm down.

Dug. But, ſiſter, you remember that upon my going abroad, you would chuſe this old gentleman for your guardian; he's no more related to our family, than *Preſter John*, and I have no reaſon to think you miſtruſted my management of your fortune: therefore pray be ſo kind as to tell me, without reſervation, the true cauſe of making ſuch a choice.

Ori. Look'e, brother, you were going rambling, and 'twas proper, leſt I ſhould go a rambling too, that ſomebody ſhould take care of me. Old Monſieur *Mirabel* is an honeſt gentleman, was our father's friend, and has a young lady in his houſe, whoſe company I like, and who has choſen him for her guardian as well as I.

Dug. Who Mademoiſelle *D'ſarre?*

Ori. The ſame; we live merrily together, without ſcandal or reproach; we make much of the old gentleman between us, and he takes care of us; we eat what we like, go to bed when we pleaſe, riſe when we will, 'all the week we dance and ſing, and upon Sundays go 'firſt to church, and then to the play.'—Now, brother, beſides theſe motives for chuſing this gentleman for my guardian, perhaps I had ſome private reaſons.

Dug. Not ſo private as you imagine, ſiſter; your love to young *Mirabel's* no ſecret, I can aſſure you, but ſo public that all your friends are aſham'd on't.

Ori. O my word then, my friends are very baſhful; tho' I'm afraid, ſir, that thoſe people are not aſham'd enough at their own crimes, who have ſo many bluſhes to ſpare for the faults of their neighbours.

Dug. Ay, but ſiſter, the people ſay——

Ori. Pſhaw, hang the people, they'll talk treaſon, and profane their Maker; muſt we therefore infer, that our king is a tyrant, and religion a cheat? Look'e, brother, their court of enquiry is a tavern, and their informer, claret: they think as they drink, and ſwallow reputations like loaches; a lady's health goes briſkly round with the glaſs, but her honour is loſt in the toaſt.

Dug. Ay, but ſiſter, there is ſtill ſomething—

Ori. If there be ſomething, brother, 'tis none of the people's ſomething; marriage is my thing, and I'll ſtick to't.

Dug. Marriage! Young *Mirabel* marry! He'll build churches ſooner. Take heed, ſiſter, tho' your honour ſtood proof to his home-bred aſſaults; you muſt keep a ſtricter guard for the future: he has now got the foreign air, and the *Italian* ſoftneſs; his wit's improved by converſe, his behaviour finiſhed by obſervation, and his aſſurances

assurances confirmed by success. Sister, I can assure you, he has made his conquests; and 'tis a plague upon your sex, to be the soonest deceiv'd by those very men that you know have been false to others.

'*Ori.* Then why will you tell me of his conquests? 'for I must confess there is no title to a woman's fa- 'vour so engaging as the repute of a handsome dissimu- 'lation; there is something of a pride to see a fellow 'lie at our feet, that has triumph'd over so many; and 'then, I don't know, we fancy he must have something 'extraordinary about him to please us, and that we 'have something engaging about us to secure him; so 'we can't be quiet till we put ourselves upon the lay of 'being both disappointed.

'*Dug.*' But then, sister, he's as fickle——

Ori. For heav'ns sake, brother, tell me no more of his faults; for if you do, I shall run mad for him: say no more, sir, let me but get him into the bands of matrimony, I'll spoil his wand'ring, I warrant him, I'll do his business that way, never fear.

Dug. Well, sister, I won't pretend to understand the engagements between you and your lover; I expect when you have need of my counsel or assistance, you will let me know more of your affairs. *Mirabel* is a gentleman, and as far as my honour and interest can reach, you may command me to the furtherance of your happiness: in the mean time, sister, I have a great mind to make you a present of another humble servant: a fellow that I took up at *Lyons*, who has serv'd me honestly ever since.

Ori. Then why will you part with him?

Dug. He has gain'd so insufferably on my good humour, that he's grown too familiar; but the fellow's cunning, and may be serviceable to you in your affair with *Mirabel*. Here he comes.

Enter Petit.

Well, sir, have you been at *Rousseau*'s?

Pet. Yes, sir, and who should I find there but Mr. *Mirabel* and the captain, hatching as warmly over a tub of ice, as two hen pheasants over a brood——They

would not let me beſpeak any thing, for they had dined before I came.

Dug. Come, ſir, you ſhall ſerve my ſiſter, I ſhall ſtill continue kind to you; and if your lady recommends your diligence upon trial, I'll uſe my intereſt to advance you; you have ſenſe enough to expect preferment.——Here, ſirrah, here's ten guineas for thee, get thyſelf a drugget ſuit and a puff-wig, and ſo——I dub thee gentleman uſher.—Siſter, I muſt put myſelf in repair, you may expect me in the evening——Wait on your lady home, *Petit.* [*Exit Dug.*

Pet. A chair, a chair, a chair!

Ori. No, no, I'll walk home, 'tis but next door.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE *a tavern, diſcovering young* Mirabel *and* Duretete *riſing from table.*

Mir. Welcome to *Paris* once more, my dear captain, we have eat heartily, drank roundly, paid plentifully, and let it go for once. I lik'd every thing but our women, they look'd ſo lean and tawdry, poor creatures! 'Tis a ſure ſign the army is not paid.——Give me the plump *Venetian*, briſk and ſanguine, that 'ſmiles upon 'me like the glowing ſun, and' meets my lips like ſparkling wine, her perſon ſhining as the glaſs, and ſpirit like the foaming liquor.

Dur. Ah, *Mirabel*, *Italy* I grant you; but for our women here in *France*, they are ſuch thin brawn fall'n jades, a man may as well make a bed-fellow of a cane chair.

Mir. France! a light unſeaſon'd country, nothing but feathers, foppery, and faſhions; 'we're fine in-'deed, ſo are our coach-horſes; men ſay we're cour-'tiers, men abuſe us; that we are wiſe and politic, *non* '*credo Seigneur:* that our women have wit; parrots, 'mere parrots, aſſurance and a good memory, ſets 'them up:——There's nothing on this ſide the *Alps* 'worth my humble ſervice t'ye'—Ha *Roma la Santa! Italy* for my money; their cuſtoms, gardens, buildings, paintings, muſic, policies, wine and women! the paradiſe of the world:—not peſter'd with a parcel of preciſe old gouty fellows, that would debar their children

dren every pleasure that they themselves are past the sense of: commend me to the *Italian* familiarity: here, son, there's fifty crowns, go pay your whore her week's allowance.

Dur. Ay, these are your fathers for you, that understand the necessities of young men; not like our musty dads, who because they cannot fish themselves, would muddy the water, and spoil the sport of them that can. But now you talk of the plump, what d'ye think of a *Dutch* woman?

Mir. A *Dutch* woman's too compact; nay, every thing among 'em is so; a *Dutch* man is thick, a *Dutch* woman is squab, a *Dutch* horse is round, a *Dutch* dog is short, a *Dutch* ship is broad-bottom'd; and, in short, one wou'd swear the whole product of the country were cast in the same mould with their cheeses.

Dur. Ay, but *Mirabel*, you have forgot the *English* ladies.

Mir. The women of *England* were excellent, did they not take such unsufferable pains to ruin what nature has made so incomparably well; they would be delicate creatures indeed, cou'd they but thoroughly arrive at the *French* mien, or entirely let it alone; for they only spoil a very good air of their own, by an awkward imitation of ours; their parliaments and our taylors give laws to their three kingdoms. But come, *Duretete*, let us mind the business in hand; mistresses we must have, and must take up with the manufacture of the place, and upon a competent diligence we shall find those in *Paris* shall match the *Italians* from top to toe.

Dur. Ay, *Mirabel*, you will do well enough, but what will become of your friend; you know I am so plaguy bashful, so naturally an ass upon these occasions, that—

Mir. Pshaw, you must be bolder, man: travel three years, and bring home such a baby as bashfulness! A great lusty fellow! and a soldier! fye upon it.

Dur. Look'e, sir, I can visit, and I can ogle a little, —as thus, or thus now.—Then I can kiss, abundantly, and make a shift to——but if they chance to give me a forbidding look, as some women, you know, have a devilish cast with their eyes—or if they cry—what d'ye

mean; what d'ye take me for? Fye, sir, remember who I am, sir——A person of quality to be us'd at this rate! I-gad I'm struck as flat as a frying-pan.

Mir. Words o'course! never mind 'em: turn you about upon your heel with a jantée air; hum out the end of an old song; cut a cross caper, and at her again.

Dur. [*Imitates him.*] No hang it, 'twill never do.—Oons, what did my father mean by sticking me up in an university, or to think that I shou'd gain any thing by my head, in a nation whose genius lies all in their heels!——Well, if ever I come to have children of my own, they shall have the education of the country, they shall learn to dance before they can walk, and be taught to sing before they can speak.

Mir. Come, come, throw off that childish humour, put on assurance, there's no avoiding it; stand all hazards, thou'rt a stout lusty fellow, and hast a good estate, look bluff, hector, you have a good side-box face, a pretty impudent face; so that's pretty well.—This fellow went abroad like an ox, and is return'd like an ass. [*Aside.*

Dur. Let me see now, how I look, [*Pulls out a pocket-glass, and looks on't.*] A side-box face, say you!—'Egad I don't like it, *Mirabel.*—Fye, sir, don't abuse your friends, I cou'd not wear such a face for the best countess in Christendom.

Mir. Why can't you, blockhead, as well as I?

Dur. Why, thou hast impudence to set a good face upon any thing, I wou'd change half my gold for half thy brass, with all my heart. Who comes here? Odso, *Mirabel,* your father!

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's *Bob?* dear *Bob?*

Mir. Your blessing, sir.

Old Mir. My Blessing! Damn ye, ye young rogue; why did not you come to see your father first, sirrah? My dear boy, I am heartily glad to see thee, my dear child, faith—Capt. *Duretete,* by the blood of the *Mirabels,* I'm your's; well, my lads, ye look bravely faith.—*Bob,* hast got any money left?

Mir. Not a farthing, sir.

Old

Old Mir. Why, then I won't gi' thee a ſouſe.

Mir. I did but jeſt, here's ten piſtoles.

Old Mir. Why, then here's ten more; I love to be charitable to thoſe that don't want it:—Well, and how d'ye like *Italy*, my boys?

Mir. O the garden of the world, ſir; *Rome*, *Naples*, *Venice*, *Milan*, and a thouſand others—all fine.

Old Mir. Ay, ſay you ſo! And they ſay, that *Chiari* is very fine too.

Dur. Indifferent, ſir, very indifferent; a very ſcurvy air, the moſt unwholeſome to a *French* conſtitution in the world.

Mir. Pſhaw, nothing on't; theſe raſcally *Gazetteers* have miſinform'd you.

Old Mir. Miſinform'd me! Oons, ſir, were not we beaten there?

Mir. Beaten, ſir! the *French* beaten!

Old Mir. Why, how was it, pray ſweet ſir?

Mir. Sir, the captain will tell you.

Dur. No, ſir, your ſon will tell you.

Mir. The captain was in the action, ſir.

Dur. Your ſon ſaw more than I, ſir, for he was a looker on.

Old Mir. Confound you both for a brace of cowards: here are no *Germans* to over-hear you; why don't ye tell me how it was?

Mir. Why, then you muſt know, that we march'd up a body of the fineſt, braveſt, well-dreſs'd fellows in the univerſe; our commanders at the head of us, all lace and feather, like ſo many beaux at a ball—I dont believe there was a man of 'em but cou'd dance a *Charmer* morbleau.

Old Mir. Dance! very well, pretty fellows, faith!

Mir. We caper'd up to their very trenches, and there ſaw peeping over a parcel of ſcare crow, olive-colour'd gunpowder fellows, as ugly as the devil.

Dur. I-gad, I ſhall never forget the looks of 'em, while I have breath to fetch.

Mir. They were ſo civil, indeed, as to welcome us with their cannon; but for the reſt, we found 'em ſuch unman-

unmannerly, rude, unſociable dogs, that we grew tir'd of their company, and ſo we e'en danc'd back again.

Old Mir. And did ye all come back?

Mir. No, two or three thouſand of us ſtay'd behind.

Old Mir. Why, *Bob*, why?

Mir. Pſhaw—becauſe they cou'd not come that night. —But come, ſir, we were talking of ſomething elſe; pray how does you lovely charge, the fair *Oriana?*

Old Mir. Ripe, ſir, juſt ripe; you'll find it better engaging with her than with the *Germans*, let me tell you. And what wou'd you ſay, my young *Mars*, if I had a *Venus* for thee too? Come, *Bob*, your apartment is ready, and pray let your friend be my gueſt too, you ſhall command the houſe between ye, and I'll be as merry as the beſt of you.

Mir. Bravely ſaid, father.

'Let miſers bend their age with niggard cares,
'And ſtarve themſelves to pamper hungry heirs;
'Who living, ſtint their ſons what youth may crave,
'And make 'em revel o'er a father's grave,
'The ſtock on which I grew does ſtill diſpenſe
'Its genial ſap into the blooming branch;
'The fruit, he knows, from his own root is grown,
'And therefore ſooths thoſe paſſions once his own.'

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *Old* Mirabel's *houſe.*

Enter Oriana *and* Biſarre.

Biſ. AND you love this young rake, d'ye?

Ori. Yes.

Biſ. In ſpight of all his ill uſage.

Ori. I can't help it.

Biſ. What's the matter wi'ye?

Ori.

Ori. Pſhaw!

Biſ. Um!—before that any young, lying, ſwearing, flattering, rakehelly fellow ſhould play ſuch tricks with me, I wou'd wear my teeth to the ſtumps with lime and chalk.—O, the devil take all your *Caſſandras* and *Cleopatras* for me.—Prithee mind your airs, modes, and faſhions; your ſtays, gowns and furbelows. Hark'ee, my dear, have you got home your furbelow'd ſmocks yet?

Ori. Prithee be quiet, *Biſarre*; you know I can be as mad as you when this *Mirabel* is out of my head.

Biſ. Pſhaw! wou'd he were out, or in, or ſome way to make you eaſy.—I warrant now, you'll play the fool when he comes, and ſay you love him; eh!

Ori. Moſt certainly,—I can't diſſemble, *Biſarre*:——beſides, 'tis paſt that, we're contracted.

Biſ. Contracted! alack-a-day, poor thing. What you have chang'd rings, or broken an old *broad-piece* between you! Heark'e, child, han't you broke ſomething elſe between ye?

Ori. No, no, I can aſſure you.

Biſ. Then, what d'ye whine for? Whilſt I kept that in my power, I wou'd make a fool of any fellow in *France*. Well, I muſt confeſs, I do love a little coquetting with all my heart! my buſineſs ſhould be to break gold with my lover one hour, and crack my promiſe the next; he ſhou'd find me one day with a prayer-book in my hand, and with a play-book another. He ſhou'd have my conſent to buy the wedding-ring, and the next moment wou'd I laugh in his face.

Ori. O my dear, were there no greater tye upon my heart, than there is upon my conſcience, I wou'd ſoon throw the contract out o' doors; 'but the miſchief on't 'is, I am ſo fond of being ty'd that I'm forc'd to be 'juſt, and the ſtrength of my paſſion keeps down the in-'clination of my ſex.' But here's the old gentleman.

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where's my wenches; where's my two little girls: Eh! have a care, look to yourſelves, faith, they're a coming, the travellers are a coming. Well! which of you two will be my daughter-in-law now, *Biſarre*,

Bisarre, Bisarre, what say you, mad-cap? *Mirabel* is a pure wild fellow.

Bis. I like him the worse.

Old Mir. You lie, hussey, you like him the better, indeed you do: What say you, my t'other little filbert? he!

Ori. I suppose the gentleman will chuse for himself sir.

Old Mir. Why, that's discreetly said; and so he shall.

Enter Mirabel *and* Duretete, *they salute the ladies.*

Old Mir. Hark'e, you shall marry one of these girls, sirrah.

Mir. Sir, I'll marry 'em both, if you please.

Bis. [*Aside.*] He'll find that one may serve his turn.

Old Mir. Both! Why, you young dog, d'ye banter me?—Come, sir, take your choice.—*Duretete,* you shall have your choice too; but *Robin* shall chuse first. Come, sir, begin.

Mir. Well, I an't the first son that has made his father's dwelling a bawdy-house—let me see.

Old Mir. Well! which d'ye like?

Mir. Both.

Old Mir. But which will you marry?

Mir. Neither.

Old Mir. Neither—Don't make me angry now, *Bob*; pray don't make me angry.—Look'e, sirrah, if I don't dance at your wedding to-morrow, I shall be very glad to cry at your grave.

Mir. That's a bull, father.

Old Mir. A bull! Why, how now, ungrateful sir, did I make thee a man, that thou shouldst make me a beast.

Mir. You pardon, sir. I only meant your expression.

Old Mir. Hark'e, *Bob,* learn better manners to your father before strangers: I won't be angry this time.—But oons, if ever you do't again, you rascal, remember what I say. [*Exit.*

Mir. Pshaw, what does the old fellow mean by mewing me up here with a couple of green girls? Come, *Duretete,* will you go?

Ori. I hope Mr. *Mirabel,* you han't forgot.—

Mir. No, no, madam, I han't forgot, I have brought you a thousand little *Italian* curiosities; I'll assure you, madam, as far as a hundred pistoles would reach, I han't forgot the least circumstance.

Ori.

Ori. Sir, you misunderstand me.

Mir. Odso, the relics, madam, from *Rome*. I do remember now you made a vow of chastity before my departure; a vow of chastity, or something like it; was it not, madam?

Ori. O sir, I'm answer'd at present. [*Exit.*

Mir. She was coming full mouth upon me with her contract—Would I might dispatch t'other.

Dur. Mirabel——that lady there, observe her, she's wond'rous pretty faith, and seems to have but few words; I like her mainly; speak to her, man, prithee speak to her.

Mir. Madam, here's a gentleman, who declares—

Dur. Madam, don't believe him, I declare nothing—What the devil do you mean, man?

Mir. He says, madam, that you are as beautiful as an angel.

Dur. He tells a damn'd lye, madam; I say no such thing: Are you mad, *Mirabel?* Why, I shall drop down with shame.

Mir. And so, madam, not doubting but your ladyship may like him as well as he does you, I think it proper to leave you together. [*Going*, Duretete *holds him.*

Dur. Hold, hold——Why, *Mirabel*, friend, sure you won't be so barbarous as to leave me alone. Prithee speak to her for yourself, as it were. Lord, lord, that a *Frenchman* should want impudence!

Mir. You look mighty demure, madam—She's deaf, captain.

Dur. I had much rather have her dumb.

Mir. The gravity of your air, madam, promises some extraordinary fruits from your study, which moves us with curiosity to enquire the subject of your ladyship's contemplation. Not a word!

Dur. I hope in the Lord she's speechless; if she be, she's mine this moment.—*Mirabel*, d'ye think a woman's silence can be natural?——

Bif. But the forms that logicians introduce, and which proceed from simple enumeration, are dubitable, and proceed only upon admittance—

Mir.

Mir. Hoyty toyty! what a plague have we hear? *Plato* in petticoats.

Dur. Ay, ay, let her go on, man; she talks in my own mother tongue.

Bif. 'Tis exposed to invalidity from a contradictory instance, looks only upon common operations, and is infinite in its termination.

Mir. Rare pedantry.

Dur. Axioms! axioms! self evident principles.

Bif. Then the ideas wherewith the mind is pre-occupate.—O gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon my cogitation; I was involv'd in a profound point of philosophy; but I shall discuss it somewhere else, being satisfy'd that the subject is not agreeable to your sparks, that profess the vanity of the times. [*Exit.*

Mir. Go thy way, good wife *Bias*: Do you hear, *Duretete?* Do'st hear this starch'd piece of austerity?

Dur. She is mine, man; she's mine: My own talent to a T. I'll match her in dialects, faith. I was seven years at the university, man, nurs'd up with *Barbara, Celarunt, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton.* Did you ever know, man, that 'twas metaphysics made me an ass? It was, faith. Had she talk'd a word of singing, dancing, plays, fashions, or the like, I had founder'd at the first step; but as she is—*Mirabel,* wish me joy.

Mir. You don't mean marriage, I hope.

Dur. No, no, I am a man of more honour.

Mir. Bravely resolv'd, captain, now for thy credit, warm me this frozen snow-ball, 'twill be a conquest above the *Alps.*

Dur. But will you promise to be always near me?

Mir. Upon all occasions, never fear.

Dur. Why then, you shall see me in two moments make an induction from my love to her hand, from her hand to her mouth, from her mouth to her heart, and so conclude in her bed, Categorematice. [*Exit.*

Mir. Now the game begins, and my fool is enter'd ——But here comes one to spoil my sport; now shall I be teas'd to death with this old fashion'd contract. I shou'd love her too, if I might do it my own way, but she'll

she'll do nothing without witnesses, forsooth. I wonder women can be so immodest.

Enter Oriana.

Well, madam, why d'ye follow me?

Ori. Well, sir, why do you shun me?

Mir. 'Tis my humour, madam, and I'm naturally sway'd by inclination.

Ori. Have you forgot our contract, sir?

Mir. All I remember of that contract is, that it was made some three years ago, and that's enough in conscience to forget the rest on't.

Ori. 'Tis sufficient, sir, to recollect the passing of it; for in that circumstance, I presume, lies the force of the obligation.

Mir. Obligations, madam, that are forc'd upon the will, are no tye upon the conscience; I was a slave to my passion when I pass'd the instrument; but the recovery of my freedom makes the contract void.

'*Ori.* Sir, you can't make that a compulsion which 'was your own choice; besides, sir, a subjection to 'your own desires has not the virtue of a forcible con-'straint: And you will find, sir, that to plead your pas-'sion for the killing of a man, will hardly exempt you 'from the justice of the punishment.

'*Mir.* And so, madam, you make the sin of murder, 'and the crime of a contract, the very same, because 'that hanging and matrimony are so much alike.'

Ori. Come, Mr *Mirabel*, these expressions I expected from the raillery of your humour, but I hope for very different sentiments from your honour and generosity.

Mir. Look'e, madam, as for my generosity, 'tis at your service, with all my heart: I'll keep you a coach and six horses, if you please, only permit me to keep my honour to myself; for I can assure you, madam, that the thing called honour is a circumstance absolutely unnecessary in a natural correspondence between male and female, and he's a mad-man that lays it out, considering its scarcity, upon any such trivial occasions. There's honour requir'd of us by our friends, and honour due to our enemies, and they return it to us again; but I never heard of a man that left but an inch of his honour

honour in a woman's keeping, that could ever get the leaſt account on't.——'Conſider, madam, you have no 'ſuch thing among ye, and 'tis a main point of policy 'to keep no faith with reprobates—thou art a pretty 'little reprobate, and ſo get thee about thy buſineſs.'

Ori. Well, ſir, ev'n all this I will allow to the gaiety of your temper; your travels have improv'd your talent of talking, but they are not of force, I hope, to impair your morals.

Mir. Morals! Why there 'tis again now—I tell thee, child, there is not the leaſt occaſion for morals in any buſineſs between you and I——Don't you know, that of all commerce in the world there is no ſuch cozenage and deceit as in the traffic between man and woman; we ſtudy all our lives long how to put tricks upon one another—'What is your buſineſs now from the time you 'throw away your artificial babies, but how to get natu-'ral ones with the moſt advantage!'—No fowler lays abroad more nets for his game, nor a hunter for his prey, than you do to catch poor innocent men—'Why do you 'ſit three or four hours at your toilet in a morning? 'only with a villainous deſign to make ſome poor fellow 'a fool before night. What are your languiſhing looks, 'your ſtudied air and affectations, but ſo many baits and 'devices to delude men out of their dear liberty and 'freedom?'—What d'ye ſigh for? What d'ye weep for? What d'ye pray for? Why, for a huſband: that is, you implore Providence to aſſiſt you in the juſt and pious deſign of making the wiſeſt of his creatures a fool, and the head of the creation a ſlave.

Ori. Sir, I am proud of my power, and am reſolv'd to uſe it.

Mir. Hold, hold, madam, not ſo faſt—As you have variety of vanities to make coxcombs of us; ſo we have vows, oaths, and proteſtations of all ſorts and ſizes to make fools of you. 'As you are very ſtrange 'and whimſical creatures, ſo we are allow'd as unac-'countable ways of managing you.' And this, in ſhort, my dear creature, is our preſent condition. I have ſworn and ly'd briſkly to gain my ends of you; your ladyſhip has patch'd and painted violently, to gain your ends:

ends of me.—But, since we are both disappointed, let us make a drawn battle, and part clear on both sides.

Ori. With all my heart, sir; give me up my contract, and I'll never see your face again.

Mir. Indeed I won't, child.

Ori. What, sir, neither do one nor t'other?

Mir. No, you shall die a maid, unless you please to be otherwise upon my terms.

Ori. What do you intend by this, sir?

Mir. Why, to starve you into compliance; look'e, you shall never marry any man; and you had as good let me do you a kindness as a stranger.

Ori. Sir, you're a——

Mir. What am I, mistress?

Ori. A villain, sir?

Mir. I'm glad on't—I never knew an honest fellow in my life, but was a villain upon these occasions.—— Ha'n't you drawn yourself now into a very pretty dilemma? Ha, ha, ha! the poor lady has made a vow of virginity, when she thought of making a vow for the contrary. Was ever poor woman so cheated into chastity?

Ori. Sir, my fortune is equal to yours, my friends as powerful, and both shall be put to the test, to do me justice.

Mir. What! you'll force me to marry you, will ye?

Ori. Sir, the law shall.

Mir. But the law can't force me to do any thing else, can it?

Ori. Pshaw, I despise thee—Monster.

Mir. Kiss and be friends then—Don't cry, child, and you shall have your sugar-plumb—Come, madam, d'ye think I could be so unreasonable as to make you fast all your life long? No, I did but jest, you shall have your liberty; here, take your contract, and give me mine.

Ori. No, I won't.

Mir. Eh! What is the girl a fool?

Ori. No, sir, you shall find me cunning enough to do myself justice; and since I must not depend upon your love, I'll be reveng'd, and force you to marry me out of spight.

Mir.

Mir. Then I'll beat thee out of ſpight; and make a moſt confounded huſband.

Ori. O ſir, I ſhall match ye: a good huſband makes a good wife at any time.

Mir. I'll rattle down your china about your ears.

Ori. And I'll rattle about the city to run you in debt for more.

Mir. Your face-mending toilet ſhall fly out of the window.

Ori. And your face-mending perriwig ſhall fly after it.

Mir. I'll tear the furbelow off your clothes, and when you ſwoon for vexation, you ſha'nt have a penny to buy a bottle of harts-horn.

Ori. And you, ſir, ſhall have harts-horn in abundance.

Mir. I'll keep as many miſtreſſes as I have coach-horſes.

Ori. And I'll keep as many gallants as you have grooms.

Mir. I'll lie with your woman before your face.

Ori. Have a care of your valet behind your back.

Mir. But, ſweet madam, there is ſuch a thing as a divorce.

Ori. But, ſweet ſir, there is ſuch a thing as alimony, ſo divorce on, and ſpare not. [*Exit.*

Mir. Ay, that ſeparate maintenance is the devil—— there's their refuge—o' my conſcience, one wou'd take cuckoldom for a meritorious action, becauſe the women are ſo handſomely rewarded for't. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to a large parlour in the ſame houſe.*

Enter Duretete *and* Petit.

Dur. And ſhe's mighty peeviſh, you ſay?

Pet. O ſir, ſhe has a tongue as long as my leg, and talks ſo crabbedly, you wou'd think ſhe always ſpoke *Welſh.*

Dur. That's an odd language, methinks, for her philoſophy.

Pet. But ſometimes ſhe will ſit you half a day without ſpeaking a word, and talk oracles all the while by the wrinkles of her forehead, and the motions of her eye-brows.

Dur. Nay, I ſhall match her in philoſophical ogles, faith; that's my talent: I can talk beſt, you muſt know, when I ſay nothing.

Pet.

Pet. But d'ye ever laugh, ſir?

Dur. Laugh? Won't ſhe endure laughing?

Pet. Why ſhe's a critic, ſir, ſhe hates a jeſt, for fear it ſhould pleaſe her; and nothing keeps her in humour but what gi*v*es her the ſpleen. And then for logic, and all that, you know——

Dur. Ay, ay, I'm prepar'd, I have been practiſing hard words, and nonſenſe, this hour to entertain her.

Pet. Then place yourſelf behind this ſcreen, that you may have a view of her behaviour before you begin.

Dur. I long to engage her, leſt I ſhou'd forget my leſſon.

Pet. Here ſhe comes, ſir, I muſt fly.

[*Exit* Pet. *and* Dur. *ſtands peeping behind the curtain.*

Enter Biſarre *and maid.*

Biſ. [*With a book*] Pſhaw, hang books, they ſour our temper, ſpoil our eyes, and ruin our complections.

[*Throws away the book.*

Dur. Eh! the devil ſuch a word is there in all *Ariſtotle.*

Biſ. Come, wench, let's be free, call in the fiddle, there'e no body near us.

Enter Fidler.

Dur. Wou'd to the Lord there was not.

Biſ. Here, friend, a minuet!—quicker time! ha—wou'd we had a man or two.

Dur. [*Stealing away.*] You ſhall have the devil ſooner, my dear dancing philoſopher.

Biſ. Uds my life!—Here's one.

[*Runs to* Dur. *and hauls him back.*

Dur. Is all my learn'd preparation come to this?

Biſ. Come, ſir, don't be aſham'd, that's my good boy—you're very welcome, we wanted ſuch a one—— Come, ſtrike up—I know you dance well, ſir, you're finely ſhap'd for't——Come, come, ſir; quick, quick, you miſs the time elſe.

Dur. But, madam, I come to talk with you.

Biſ. Ay, ay, talk as you dance, talk as you dance, come.

Dur. But we were talking of dialectics.

Biſ. Hang dialectics——Mind the time——quicker, Sirrah, [*To the fidler*] Come—and how d'ye find yourſelf now, ſir?

Dur. In a fine breathing ſweat, doctor.

Biſ.

Bif. All the better, patient, all the better;——Come, ſir, ſing now, ſing, I know you ſing well; I ſee you have a ſinging face; a heavy dull ſonato face.

Dur. Who, I ſing?

Bif. O you're modeſt, ſir—but come, ſit down, cloſer, cloſer. Here, a bottle of wine——Come, ſir, fa, la, lay; ſing, ſir.

Dur. But, madam, I came to talk with you.

Bif. O ſir, you ſhall drink firſt. Come, fill me a bumber—here, ſir, bleſs the king.

Dur. Wou'd I were out of his dominions——by this light, ſhe'll make me drunk too.

Bif. O pardon me, ſir, you ſhall do me right, fill it higher.——Now, ſir, can you drink a health under your leg?

Dur. Rare philoſophy that, faith.

Bif. Come, off with it to the bottom.——Now, how d'ye like me, ſir?

Dur. O mighty well, madam.

Bif. You ſee how a woman's fancy varies, ſometimes ſplenetic and heavy, then gay and frolicſome.—And how d'ye like the humour?

Dur. Good madam, let me ſit down to anſwer you, for I am heartily tir'd.

Bif. Fye upon't; a young man, and tir'd! up for ſhame, and walk about, action becomes us—a little faſter, ſir.—What d'ye think now of my lady *La Pale*, and lady *Coquet*, the Duke's fair daughter? Ha! Are they not briſk laſſes? Then there is black Mrs. *Bellair*, and brown Mrs. *Bellface*.

Dur. They are all ſtrangers to me, madam.

Bif. But let me tell you, ſir, that brown is not always deſpicable—O lard, ſir, if young Mrs. *Bagatell* had kept herſelf ſingle 'till this time, o'day, what a beauty there had been! And then, you know, the charming Mrs. *Monkeylove*, the fair gem of St. *Germains*.

Dur. Upon my ſoul, I don't.

Bif. And then you muſt have heard of the *Engliſh* beau, *Splenamore*, how unlike a gentleman—

Dur. Hey—not a ſyllable on't, as I hope to be ſaved, madam.

Bif. No! Why then play me a jig. Come, sir.

Dur. By this light I cannot; faith, madam, I have sprain'd my leg.

Bif. Then sit you down, sir; and now tell me what's your business with me? What's your errand? Quick, quick, dispatch—Odso, may be you are some gentleman's servant, that has brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison.

Dur. 'Sdeath, madam, do I look like a carrier?

Bif. O! cry you mercy, I saw you just now, I mistook you, upon my word: you are one of the travelling gentlemen—and pray, sir, how do all our impudent friends in *Italy?*

Dur. Madam, I came to wait on you with a more serious intention than your entertainment has answered.

Bif. Sir, your intention of waiting on me was the greatest affront imaginable, howe'er your expressions may turn it to a compliment: your visit, sir, was intended as a prologue to a very scurvy play, of which Mr. *Mirabel* and you so handsomely laid the plot.—*Marry! No, no, I'm a man of more honour.* Where's your honour? Where's your courage now? Ads my life, sir, I have a great mind to kick you.—Go, go to your fellow-rake now, rail at my sex and get drunk for vexation, and write a lampoon—But I must have you to know, sir, that my reputation is above the scandal of a libel, my virtue is sufficiently approv'd to those whose opinion is my interest: and for the rest, let them talk what they will; for when I please I'll be what I please, in spight of you and all mankind; and so my dear *man of honour*, if you be tir'd, con over this lesson, and sit there till I come to you. [*Runs off.*

Dur. Tum ti tum. [*Sings*] Ha, ha, ha! *Ads my life, I have a great mind to kick you!*—Oons and confusion! [*Starts up*] Was ever man so abus'd?—Ay, *Mirabel* set me on.

Enter Petit.

Pet. Well, sir, how d'ye find yourself?

Dur. You son of a nine-ey'd whore, d'ye come to abuse me? I'll kick you with a vengeance, you dog.

[Petit *runs off, and* Dur. *after him.*

ACT III.

SCENE *continues.*

Old Mirabel *and the Young.*

Old Mir. BOB, come hither, *Bob.*

Mir. Your pleaſure, ſir?

Old Mir. Are not you a great rogue, ſirrah?

Mir. That's a little out of my comprehenſion, ſir, for I've heard ſay, that I reſemble my father.

Old Mir. Your father is your very humble ſlave—I tell thee what, child, thou art a very pretty fellow, and I love thee heartily; and a very great villain, and I hate thee mortally.

Mir. Villain, ſir! then I muſt be a very impudent one, for I can't recollect any paſſage of my life that I'm aſham'd of,

Old Mir. Come hither, my dear friend; do'ſt ſee this picture? [*Shews him a little picture.*

Mir. Oriana's? Pſhaw!

Old Mir. What, ſir, won't you look upon't—*Bob*, dear *Bob*, prithee come hither now—Do'ſt want any money, child?

Mir. No, ſir.

Old Mir. Why then here's ſome for thee; come here now——How can'ſt thou be ſo heard-hearted, an unnatural, unmannerly raſcal (don't miſtake me, child, I a'nt angry) as to abuſe this tender, lovely, good-natur'd dear rogue?——Why, ſhe ſighs for thee, and cries for thee, pouts for thee, and ſnubs for thee, the poor little heart of it is like to burſt——Come, my dear boy, be good-natur'd like your own father, be now——and then ſee here, read this——the effigies of the lovely *Oriana*, with ten thouſand pounds to her portion—ten thouſand pounds you dog; ten thouſand pounds you rogue; how dare you refuſe a lady with ten thouſand pounds, you impudent raſcal:

Mir. Will you hear me ſpeak, ſir?

Old Mir. Hear you ſpeak, ſir! If you had ten thouſand tongues, you cou'd not out-talk ten thouſand pounds, ſir.

Mir.

Mir. Nay, ſir, if you won't hear me I'll be gone, ſir! I'll take poſt for *Italy* this moment.

Old Mir. Ah!-the fellow knows I won't part with him. Well, ſir, what have you to ſay?

Mir. The univerſal reception, ſir, that marriage has had in the world, is enough to fix it for a public good, and to draw every body into the common cauſe; but there are ſome conſtitutions, like ſome inſtruments, ſo peculiarly ſingular, that they make tolerable muſic by themſelves, but never do well in a concert.

Old Mir. Why this is reaſon, I muſt confeſs, but yet it is nonſenſe too; for tho' you ſhou'd reaſon like an angel, if you argue yourſelf out of a good eſtate, you talk like a fool.

Mir. But, ſir, if you bribe me into bondage with the riches of *Cræſus*, you leave me but a beggar for want of my liberty.

Old Mir. Was ever ſuch a perverſe fool heard? 'Sdeath, ſir, why did I give you education? was it to diſpute me out of my ſenſes? Of what colour now is the head of this cane? You'll ſay 'tis white, and ten to one make me believe it too——I thought that young fellows ſtudied to get money.

Mir. No, ſir, I have ſtudy'd to deſpiſe it; my reading was not to make me rich, but happy, ſir.

Old Mir. There he has me again now. But, ſir, did not I marry to oblige you?

Mir. To oblige me, ſir, in what reſpect pray?

Old Mir. Why, to bring you into the world, ſir; wasn't that an obligation?

Mir. And becauſe I wou'd have it ſtill an obligation, I avoid marriage.

Old Mir. How is that, ſir?

Mir. Becauſe I wou'd not curſe the hour I was born.

Old Mir. Look'e, friend, you may perſuade me out of my deſigns, but I'll command you out of yours; and tho' you may convince my reaſon that you are in the right, yet there is an old attendant of ſixty-three, call'd poſitiveneſs, which you nor all the wits in *Italy*

ſhall ever be able to ſhake: ſo, ſir, you're a wit, and I'm a father; you may talk, but I'll be obey'd.

Mir. This it is to have the ſon a finer gentleman than the father; they firſt give us breeding that they don't underſtand, then they turn us out of doors 'cauſe we are wiſer than themſelves. But I'm a little aforehand with the old gentleman. [*Aſide.*] Sir, you have been pleas'd to ſettle a thouſand pound ſterling a year upon me; in return of which, I have a very great honour for you and you family, and ſhall take care that your only and beloved ſon ſhall do nothing to make him hate his father, or to hang himſelf. So, dear ſir, I'm your very humble ſervant. [*Runs off.*

Old Mir. Here, ſirrah, rogue, *Bob*, villain!

Enter Dugard.

Dug. Ah, ſir, 'tis but what he deſeves.

Old Mir. 'Tis falſe, ſir, he don't deſerve it: what have you to ſay againſt my boy, ſir?

Dug. I ſhall only repeat your own words.

Old Mir. What have you to do with my words? I have ſwallow'd my words already, I have eaten them up, and how can you come at 'em, ſir?

Dug. Very eaſily, ſir: 'Tis but mentioning your injur'd ward, and you will throw them up again immediately.

Old Mir. Sir, your ſiſter was a fooliſh young flirt to truſt any ſuch young, deceitful, rake-helly rogue, like him.

Dug. Cry you mercy, old gentleman, I thought we ſhou'd have the words again.

Old Mir. And what then? 'Tis the way with young fellows to ſlight an old gentleman's words, you never mind 'em when you ought.—I ſay, that *Bob*'s an honeſt fellow, and who dares deny it?

Enter Biſarre.

Biſ. That dare I, ſir:—I ſay, that your ſon is a wild, foppiſh, whimſical, impertinent coxcomb; and where I abu'd as this gentleman's ſiſter is, I wou'd make it an *Italian* quarrel, and poiſon the whole family.

Dug. Come, ſir, 'tis no time for trifling, my ſiſter is abus'd; you are made ſenſible of the affront, and your honour is concern'd to ſee her redreſs'd.

Old Mir.

INCONSTANT.

Dodd ad riv del. *Goldar sculp.*

Mr. WILSON as OLD MIRABEL.

Here, Sirrah, Rogue, Bob, Villain

Act 3, Scen

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Old Mir. Look'e, Mr. *Dugard*, good words go farthest. I will do your ſiſter juſtice, but it muſt be after my own rate: no body muſt abuſe my ſon but myſelf. For altho' *Robin* be a ſad dog, yet he's no body's puppy but my own.

Bif. Ay, that's my ſweet-natur'd, kind old gentleman—[*Wheedling him.*] We will be good then, if you'll join with us in the plot.

Old Mir. Ah, you coaxing young baggage, what plot can you have to wheedle a fellow of ſixty-three?

Bif. A plot that ſixty-three is only good for, to bring other people together, ſir; a *Spaniſh* plot 'leſs dangerous 'than that of eighty-eight,' and you muſt act the *Spaniard*, 'cauſe your ſon will leaſt ſuſpect you; and if he ſhou'd, your authority protects you from a quarrel, to which *Oriana* is unwilling to expoſe her brother.

Old Mir. And what part will you act in the buſineſs, madam?

Bif. Myſelf, ſir; my friend is grown a perfect changeling: theſe fooliſh hearts of ours ſpoil our heads preſently; the fellows no ſooner turn knaves, but we turn fools: but I am ſtill myſelf, and he may expect the moſt ſevere uſage from me, 'cauſe I neither love him, nor hate him. [*Exit.*

Old Mir. Well ſaid, Mrs. Paradox; but, ſir, who muſt open the matter to him?

Dug. Petit, ſir, who is our engineer-general. And here he comes.

Enter Petit.

Pet. O ſir, more diſcoveries; are all friends about us?

Dug. Ay, ay, ſpeak freely.

Pet. You muſt know, ſir.—— od's my life I'm out of breath; you muſt know, ſir—you muſt know—

Old Mir. What the devil muſt we know, ſir?

Pet. That I have [*Pants and blows*] brib'd, ſir, brib'd—your ſon's ſecretary of ſtate!

Old Mir. Secretary of ſtate!—who's that for Heav'n's ſake?

Pet. His valet-de-chambre, ſir? You muſt know, ſir, that the intrigue lay folded up with his maſter's clothes, and when he went to duſt the embroider'd ſuit, the ſe-

cret flew out of the right pocket of his coat, in a whole ſwarm of your crambo ſongs, ſhort-footed odes, and long-legg'd Pindarics.

Old Mir. Impoſſible!

Pet. Ah, ſir, he has lov'd her all along; there was *Oriana* in every line, but he hates marriage. Now, ſir, this plot will ſtir up his jealouſy, and we ſhall know by the ſtrength of that how to proceed farther.

Come, ſir, lets about it with ſpeed,
'Tis expedition gives our king the ſway;
For expedition to the *French* give way;
Swift to attack, or ſwift—to run away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mirabel *and* Biſarre, *paſſing careleſsly by one another.*

Biſ. [*Aſide.*] I wonder what ſhe can ſee in this fellow to like him?

Mir. [*Aſide.*] I wonder what my friend can ſee in this girl to admire her?

Biſ. [*Aſide.*] A wild, foppiſh, extravagant rake-hell.

Mir. [*Aſide.*] A light, whimſical, impertinent madcap.

Biſ. Whom do you mean, ſir?

Mir. Whom do you mean, madam?

Biſ. A fellow that has nothing left to re-eſtabliſh him for a human creature, but a prudent reſolution to hang himſelf.

Mir. There is a way, madam, to force me to that reſolution.

Biſ. I'll do't with all my heart.

Mir. Then you muſt marry me.

Biſ. Look'e, ſir, don't think your ill manners to me ſhall excuſe your ill uſage of my friend; nor by fixing a quarrel here, to divert my zeal for the abſent; for I'm reſolv'd, nay, I come prepar'd to make you a panegyric, that ſhall mortify your pride like any modern dedication.

Mir. And I, madam, like a true modern patron, ſhall hardly give you thanks for your trouble.

Biſ. Come, ſir, to let you ſee what little foundation you have for your dear ſufficiency, I'll take you to pieces.

Mir. And what piece will you chuſe?

Biſ.

Bif. You heart, to be ſure; 'cauſe I ſhou'd get preſently rid on't; your courage I wou'd give to a *Hector*, your wit to a lewd play-maker, you honour to an attorney, your body to the phyſicians, and your ſoul to its maſter.

Mir. I had the oddeſt dream laſt night of the dutcheſs of *Burgundy*; methought the furbelows of her gown were pinn'd up ſo high behind, that I cou'd not ſee her head for her tail.

Bif. The creature don't mind me! do you think, ſir, that your humourous impertinence can divert me? No, ſir, I'm above any pleaſure that you can give, but that of ſeeing you miſerable. And mark me, ſir, my friend, my injur'd friend, ſhall yet be doubly happy, and you ſhall be a huſband as much as the rites of marriage, and the breach of 'em can make you.

[*Here* Mirabel *pulls out a* Virgil, *and reads to himſelf while ſhe ſpeaks.*]

Mir. [Reading.] *At Regina dolos, (quis fallere poſſit amantem?)*

Diſſimulare etiam ſperâſti, perfide tantum [Very true.] *Poſſe nefas.*

By your favour, friend *Virgil*, 'twas but a raſcally trick of your hero to forſake poor pug ſo inhumanly.

Bif. I don't know what to ſay to him. The devil — what's *Virgil* to us, ſir?

Mir. Very much, madam, the moſt appropos in the world—for, what ſhou'd I chop upon, but the very place where the perjur'd rogue of a lover and the forſaking lady are battling it tooth and nail. Come, madam, ſpend your ſpirits no longer, we'll take an eaſier method: I'll be *Æneas* now, and you ſhall be *Dido*, and we'll rail by book. Now for you, madam *Dido*.

Nec te noſter amor, nec te data dextera quondam,
Nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido——

Ah, poor *Dido!* [*Looking at her.*

Bif. Rudeneſs, affronts, impatience! I cou'd almoſt ſtart out even to manhood, and want but a weapon as long as his to fight him upon the ſpot. What ſhall I ſay?

Mir. Now she rants.

Quæ quibus anteferam? jam jam nec Maxima Juno.

Bis. A man! No, the woman's birth was spirited away.

Mir. Right, right, madam, the very words.

Bis. And some pernicious elf left in the cradle with human shape to palliate growing mischief.

[*Both speak together, and raise their voices by degrees.*

Mir. *Perfide, sed duris genuit te Cautibus horrens*
Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt Ubera Tigres.

Bis. Go, sir, fly to your midnight revels.——

Mir. [Excellent.] *I sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas,*
Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia Numina possunt.
[*Together again.*

Bis. Converse with imps of darkness of your make, your nature starts at justice, and shivers at the touch of virtue. Now the devil take his impudence, he vexes me so, I don't know whether to cry or laugh at him.

Mir. Bravely perform'd, my dear *Libyan*; I'll write the tragedy of *Dido*, and you shall act the part: but you do nothing at all, unless you fret yourself into a fit; for here the poor lady is stifled with vapours, drops into the arms of her maids; and the cruel, barbarous, deceitful wanderer, is in the very next line call'd *Pius Æneas*.—There's authority for ye.

Sorry indeed *Æneas* stood
To see her in a pout;
But *Jove* himself, who ne'er thought good
To stay a second bout,
Commands him off with all his crew,
And leaves poor *Dy*, as I leave you. [*Runs off.*

Bis. Go thy ways, for a dear, mad, deceitful, agreeable fellow. O' my conscience I must excuse *Oriana*.

That lover soon his angry fair disarms,
Whose slighting pleases, and whose faults are charms.
[*Exit.*

Enter Petit, *runs about to every door, and knocks.*

Pet. Mr. *Mirabel!* Sir, where are you? no where to be found?

Enter

Enter Mirabel.

Mir. What's the matter, *Petit?*

Pet. Moſt critically met—Ah, ſir, that one who has follow'd the game ſo long, and brought the poor hare juſt under his paws, ſhould let a mungrel cur chop in, and run away with the puſs.

Mir. If your worſhip can get out of your allegories, be pleas'd to tell me in three words what you mean.

Pet. Plain, plain, ſir. Your miſtreſs and mine is going to be marry'd.

Mir. I believe you lye, ſir.

Pet. Your humble ſervant, ſir. [*Going.*

Mir. Come hither, *Petit.* Marry'd, ſay you?

Pet. No, ſir, 'tis no matter; I only thought to do you a ſervice, but I ſhall take care how I confer my favours for the future.

Mir. Sir, I beg ten thouſand pardons. [*Bowing low.*

Pet. 'Tis enough, ſir,—I come to tell you, ſir, that *Oriana* is this moment to be ſacrificed; marry'd paſt redemption.

Mir. I underſtand her, ſhe'll take a huſband out of ſpight to me, and then out of love to me ſhe will make him a cuckold; 'tis ordinary with women to marry one 'perſon for the ſake of another, and to throw themſelves 'into the arms of one they hate, to ſecure their pleaſure 'with the man they love.' But who is the happy man?

Pet. A lord, ſir.

Mir. I'm her ladyſhip's moſt humble ſervant; a train and a title, hey! Room for my lady's coach, a front-row in the box for her ladyſhip; lights, lights for her honour.—Now muſt I be a conſtant attender at my lord's levee, to work my way to my lady's couchee——a counteſs; I preſume, ſir.——

Pet. A *Spaniſh* count, ſir, that Mr. *Dugard* knew abroad, is come to *Paris*, ſaw your miſtreſs yeſterday, marries her to-day, and whips her into *Spain* to-morrow.

Mir. Ay, is it ſo? and muſt I follow my cuckold over the *Pyrenees?* Had ſhe marry'd within the precincts of a billet-doux, I would be the man to lead her to church; but as it happens, I'll forbid the banns. Where is this mighty don?

Pet. Have a care, sir, he's a rough cross-grained piece, and there's no tampering with him; wou'd you apply to Mr. *Dugard*, or the lady herself, something might be done, for it is despight to you, that the business it carry'd so hastily. Odso, sir, here he comes. I must be gone. [*Exit.*

Enter Old Mir. *dressed in a* Spanish *Habit, leading* Oriana.

Ori. Good my lord, a nobler choice had better suited your lordship's merit. My person, rank, and circumstance, expose me as the public theme of raillery, and subject me so to injurious usage, my lord, that I can lay no claim to any part of your regard, except your pity.

Old Mir. Breathes he vital air, that dares presume
With rude behaviour to profane such excellence?
Shew me the man———
And you shall see how my sudden revenge
Shall fall upon the head of such presumption.
Is this thing one? [*Strutting up to* Mirabel.

Mir. Sir?

Ori. Good my lord.

Old Mir. If he, or any he!

Ori. Pray, my lord, the gentleman's a stranger.

Old Mir. O your pardon, sir,—but if you had——remember, sir,—the lady now is mine, her injuries are mine; therefore, sir, you understand me——Come, madam. [*Leads* Oriana *to the door, she goes off,* Mir. *runs to his father, and pulls him by the sleeve.*

Mir. Ecoute, Monsieur le Count.

Old Mir. Your business, sir?

Mir. Boh!

Old Mir. Boh! What language is that, sir?

Mir. Spanish, my lord.

Old Mir. What d'ye mean?

Mir. This, sir. [*Trips up his heels.*

Old Mir. A very concise quarrel, truly——I'll bully him.——*Trinidade Seigneur,* give me fair play. [*Offering to rise.*

Mir. By all means, sir. [*Takes away his sword.*] Now *Seigneur,* where's that bombast look, and fustian face your countship wore just now? [*Strikes him.*

Old

Old Mir. The rogue quarrels well, very well, my own ſon right!—But hold, ſirrah, no more jeſting; I'm your father, ſir, your father.

Mir. My father! Then by this light I could find in my heart to pay thee. [*Aſide.*] Is the fellow mad? Why ſure, ſir, I ha'n't frighted you out of your ſenſes?

Old Mir. But you have, ſir.

Mir. Then I'll beat them into you again.

[*Offers to ſtrike him.*

Old Mir. Why, rogue——*Bob*, dear *Bob*, don't you know me, child!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! the fellow's downright diſtracted. Thou miracle of impudence! wou'dſt thou make me believe that ſuch a grave gentleman as my father wou'd go a maſquerading thus? That a perſon of threeſcore and three would run about in a fool's coat to diſgrace himſelf and family? Why, you impudent villain, do you think I will ſuffer ſuch an affront to paſs upon my honour'd father, my worthy father, my dear father? 'Sdeath, ſir, mention my father but once again, and I'll ſend your ſoul to thy grandfather this minute!

[*Offering to ſtab him.*

Old Mir. Well, well, I am not your father.

Mir. Why then, ſir, you are the ſaucy, hectoring *Spaniard*, and I'll uſe you accordingly.

'*Old Mir.* The devil take the *Spaniards*, ſir, we have 'all got nothing but blows ſince we began to take their 'part.'

Enter Dugard, Oriana, Maid, Petit. Dugard *runs to* Mirabel, *the reſt to the Old Gentleman.*

Dug. Fye, fye, *Mirabel*, murder your father!

Mir. My father! what is the whole family mad? Give me way, ſir, I won't be held.

Old Mir. No? nor I neither; let me be gone, pray.

[*Offering to go.*

Mir. My father!

Old Mir. Ay, you dog's face! I am your father, for I have bore as much for thee, as your mother ever did.

Mir. O ho! then this was a trick, it ſeems a deſign, a contrivance, a ſtratagem—Oh! how my bones ach!

Old Mir. Your bones ſirrah, why yours?

Mir.

Mir. Why, sir, han't I been beating my own flesh and blood all this while! O, madam, [*To* Oriana] I wish your ladyship joy of your new dignity. Here was a contrivance indeed.

Pet. The contrivance was well enough, sir, for they impos'd upon us all.

Mir. Well my dear *Dulcinea*, did your *Don Quixote* battle for you bravely? My father will answer for the force of my love.

Ori. Pray, sir, don't insult the misfortunes of your own creating.

Dug. My prudence will be counted cowardice, if I stand tamely now. [*Comes up between* Mirabel *and his sister.*] Well, sir,

Mir. Well, sir! Do you take me for one of your tenants, sir, that you put on your landlord face at me?

Dug. On what presumption, sir, dare you assume thus? [*Draws.*

Old Mir. What's that to you, sir. [*Draws.*

Pet. Help! help! the lady faints.

[Oriana *falls into her Maid's arms.*

Mir. Vapours! vapours! she'll come to herself: If it be an angry fit, a dram of *asa fœtida*——If jealousy, harts horn in water——If the mother, burnt feathers——If grief, *ratifia*—If it be strait stays, or corns, there's nothing like a dram of plain brandy. [*Exit.*

Ori. 'Hold off, give me air'——O my brother, would you preserve my life, endanger not your own; would you defend my reputation, leave it to itself; 'tis a dear vindication that's purchas'd by the sword; for tho' our champion proves victorious, yet our honour is wounded.

Old Mir. Ay, and your lover may be wounded, that's another thing. But I think you are pretty brisk again, my child.

Ori. Ay, sir, my indisposition was only a pretence to divert the quarrel; the capricious taste of your sex excuses this artifice in ours.

For often when our chief perfections fail,
Our chief defects with foolish men prevail. [*Exit.*

Pet.

Pet. Come, Mr. *Dugard*, take courage, there is a way ſtill left to fetch him again.

Old Mir. Sir, I'll have no plot that has any relation to *Spain*.

Dug. I ſcorn all artifice whatſoever; my ſword ſhall do her juſtice.

Pet. Pretty juſtice, truly! ſuppoſe you run him thro' the body; you run her thro' the heart at the ſame time.

Old Mir. And me thro' the head—rot your ſword, ſir, we'll have plots; come, *Petit*, let's hear.

Pet. What if ſhe pretended to go into a nunnery, and ſo bring him about to declare himſelf?

Dug. That I muſt confeſs has a face.

Old Mir. A face! a face like an angel, ſir, ad's my life, ſir, 'tis the moſt beautiful plot in *Chriſtendom*. We'll about it immediately. [*Exeunt.*

'SCENE, *The Street.*

'Duretete *and* Mirabel.

'*Dur.* [*In a paſſion.*] And tho' I can't dance, nor ſing, 'nor talk like you, yet I can fight, you know I can, ſir.

'*Mir* I know thou can'ſt, man.

'*Dur.* 'Sdeath, ſir, and I will: let me ſee the proud-'eſt man alive make a jeſt of me?

'*Mir* But I'll engage to make you amends.

'*Dur.* Danc'd to death! Baited like a bear! Ridi-'cul'd! Threaten'd to be kick'd! Confuſion! ſir, you 'ſet me on, and I will have ſatisfaction; all mankind will 'point at me.

'*Mir.* [*Aſide.*] I muſt give this thunderbolt ſome paſ-'ſage, or 'twill break upon my own head—Look'e, '*Duretete*, what do theſe gentlemen laugh at?

'*Enter two gentlemen.*

'*Dur.* At me, to be ſure—Sir, what made you laugh 'at me?

'1 *Gen.* You're miſtaken, ſir, if we were merry, we 'had a private reaſon.

'2 *Gen.* Sir, we don't know you.

'*Dur.* Sir, I'll make you know me; mark and obſerve 'me, I won't be nam'd; it ſhan't be mention'd, not even 'whiſper'd in your prayers at church. 'Sdeath, ſir, d'ye 'ſmile?

'1 *Gen.* Not I, upon my word.

'*Dur.*

'*Dur.* Why then, look grave as an owl in a barn, or 'a friar with his crown a shaving.

'*Mir.* [*Aside to the Gent.*] Don't be bully'd out of your 'humour, gentlemen; the fellow's mad, laugh at him, 'and I'll stand by you.

'1 *Gen.* I gad and so we will.

'*Both.* Ha, ha, ha!

'*Dur.* Very pretty. [*Draws.*] She threaten'd to kick 'me. Ay, then, you dogs, I'll murder ye. [*Fights, and beats them off,* Mir. *runs over to his side.*

'*Mir.* Ha, ha, ha! bravely done, *Duretete*, there you 'had him, noble captain; hey, they run, they run, *Vic-* '*toria, Victoria*—Ha, ha, ha—how happy am I in an 'excellent friend! tell me of your virtuoso's and men of 'sense, a parcel of four-fac'd splenetic rogues—a man 'of my thin constitution should never want a fool in his 'company: I don't affect your fine things that improve 'the understanding, but hearty laughing to fatten my 'carcase: and in my conscience, a man of sense is as 'melancholy without a coxcomb, as a lion without a 'jackall; he hunts for our diversion, starts game for our 'spleen and perfectly feeds us with pleasure.

'I hate the man who makes acquaintance nice,
'And still discreetly plagues me with advice;
'Who moves by caution, and mature delays,
'And must give reasons for whate'er he says.
'The man, indeed, whose converse is so full,
'Makes me attentive, but it makes me dull:
'Give me the careless rogue, who never thinks,
'That plays the fool as freely as he drinks.
'Not a buffoon, who is buffoon by trade,
'But one that nature, not his wants have made.
'Who still is merry, but does ne'er design it;
'And still is ridicul'd, but ne'er can find it.
'Who when he's most in earnest, is the best;
'And his most grave expression is a jest. [*Exit.*'

ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, *Old* Mirabel's *Houſe*.

Enter Old Mirabel *and* Dugard.

Dug. THE Lady Abbeſs is my relation, and privy to the plot. 'Your ſon has been there, but 'had no admittance beyond the privilege of the grate, 'and there my ſiſter refus'd to ſee him. He went off 'more nettled at his repulſe, than I thought his gaiety 'could admit.'

Old Mir. Ay, ay, this nunnery will bring him about, I warrant ye.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Here, where are you all!—O! Mr. *Mirabel*, you have done fine things for your poſterity—And you, Mr. *Dugard*, may come to anſwer this—I come to demand my friend at your hands; reſtore him, ſir, or—[*To Old* Mir.

Old Mir. Reſtore him! What d'ye think I have got him in my trunk or in my pocket!

Dur. Sir, he's mad, and you're the cauſe on't.

Old Mir. That may be; for I was as mad as he when I begot him.

Dug. Mad, ſir, what d'ye mean?

Dur. What do you mean, ſir, by ſhutting up your ſiſter to talk like a parrot thro' a cage? Or a decoy-duck, to draw others into a ſnare? Your ſon, ſir, becauſe ſhe has deſerted him, he has forſaken the world! and in three words, has——

Old Mir. Hang'd himſelf!

Dur. The very ſame, turn'd friar.

Old Mir. You lie, ſir, 'tis ten times worſe. *Bob* turn'd friar! Why ſhould the fellow ſhave his fooliſh crown when the ſame razor may cut his throat?

Dur. If you have any command, or you any intereſt over him, loſe not a minute: He has thrown himſelf into the next monaſtery, and has oder'd me to pay off his ſervants, and diſcharge his equipage.

Old Mir. Let me alone to ferret him out; I'll ſacrifice the Abbot, if he receives him; I'll try whether the ſpiritual

ſpiritual or the natural father has the moſt right to the child.——But, dear captain, what has he done with his eſtate?

Dur. Settled it upon the church, ſir.

Old Mir. The church! nay, then the devil won't get him out of their clutches——Ten thouſand livres a year upon the church! 'tis downright ſacrilege—Come, gentlemen, all hands to work; for half that ſum, one of theſe monaſtries ſhall protect you a traitor from the law, a rebellious wife from her huſband, and a diſobedient ſon from his own father. [*Exit.*

Dug. But will ye perſuade me that he's gone to a monaſtery?

Dur. Is your ſiſter gone to the *Filles Repenties?* I tell you, ſir, ſhe's not fit for the ſociety of repenting maids.

Dug. Why ſo, ſir?

Dur. Becauſe ſhe's neither one nor t'other; ſhe's too old to be a maid, and too young to repent.

[*Exit* Dug. *after him.*

SCENE, *the Inſide of a Monaſtery*; Oriana *in a Nun's habit*; Biſarre.

Ori. I hope, *Biſarre*, there is no harm in jeſting with this religious habit.

Biſ. To me, the greateſt jeſt in the habit, is taking it in earneſt: I don't underſtand this impriſoning people with the keys of *Paradiſe*, nor the merit of that virtue which comes by conſtraint.—Beſides, we may own to one another, that we are in the worſt company when among ourſelves; for our private thoughts run us into thoſe deſires, which our pride reſiſts from the attack of the world; and, you may remember, the firſt woman met the devil when ſhe retir'd from her man.

Ori. But I'm reconcil'd, methinks to the mortification of a nunnery; becauſe I fancy the habit becomes me.

Biſ. A well-contriv'd mortification, truly, that makes a woman look ten times handſomer than ſhe did before! —Ay, my dear, were there any religion in becoming dreſs, our ſex's devotion were rightly plac'd; for our toilets would do the work of the altar; we ſhou'd all be canoniz'd.

Ori.

'*Ori.* But don't you think there is a great deal of 'merit in dedicating a beautiful face and perſon to the 'ſervice of religion?

'*Bif.* Not half ſo much as devoting 'em to a pretty 'fellow: if our feminality had no buſineſs in this 'world, why was it ſent hither? Let us dedicate our 'beautiful minds to the ſervice of Heaven. And for 'our handſome perſons, they become a box at the 'play, as well as a pew in the church.

'*Ori.* But the viciſſitude of fortune, the inconſtancy 'of man, with other diſappointments of life, require 'ſome place of religion, for a refuge from their perſecu-'tion.

'*Bif.* Ha, ha, ha! and do you think there is any devo-'tion in a fellow's going to church, when he takes it only 'for a ſanctuary? Don't you know that religion conſiſts 'in charity with all mankind, and that you ſhould never 'think of being friends with Heaven, till you have quar-'relled with all the world?' Come, come, mind your buſineſs, *Mirabel* loves you, 'tis now plain, and hold him to't; give freſh orders that he ſhan't ſee you: we get more by hiding our faces ſometimes, than by expoſing them; a very maſk, you ſee, whets deſire; but a pair of keen eyes thro' an iron grate fire double upon 'em, with view and diſguiſe. But I muſt be gone upon my affairs, I have brought my captain about again.

Ori. But why will you trouble yourſelf with that cox-comb?

Bif. Becauſe he is a coxcomb; had I not better have a lover like him, that I can make an aſs of, than a lover like yours, to make a fool of me. [*Knocking below.*] A meſſage from *Mirabel*, I'll lay my life. [*She runs to the door.*] Come hither, run, thou charming nun come hither.

'*Ori.* What's the news? [*Runs to her.*

'*Bif.* Don't you ſee who's below?

'*Ori.* I ſee no body but a friar.

'*Bif.* Ah! thou poor blind *Cupid!* O' my con-'ſcience, theſe hearts of ours ſpoil our heads inſtantly! 'the fellows no ſooner turn knaves, than we turn fools. 'A friar! Don't you ſee a villainous genteel mein under 'that cloak of hypocriſy, the looſe careleſs air of a tall 'rake-helly fellow?'

Ori.

Ori. As I live, *Mirabel* turn'd friar! I hope, in Heaven, he's not in earneſt.

Biſ. In earneſt: ha, ha, ha! are you in earneſt? Now's your time; this diſguiſe has he certainly taken for a paſſport, to get in and try your reſolutions; ſtick to your habit, to be ſure; treat him with diſdain, rather than anger; for pride becomes us more than paſſion: remember what I ſay, if you wou'd yield to advantage, and hold out the attack; to draw him on, keep him off to be ſure.

The cunning gameſters never gain too faſt,
But loſe at firſt, to win the more at laſt. [*Exit.*

'*Ori.* His coming puts me into ſome ambiguity. I 'don't know how; I don't fear him, but I miſtruſt my-'ſelf; wou'd he were not come, yet I wou'd not have 'him gone neither; I'am afraid to talk with him, but 'I love to ſee him tho'.

'*What a ſtrange power has this fantaſtic fire,*
'*That makes us dread even what we moſt deſire!*'

Enter Mirabel *in a Friar's habit.*

Mir. Save you, ſiſter—Your brother, young lady, having a regard for your ſoul's health, has ſent me to prepare you for the ſacred habit by confeſſion.

Ori. That's falſe, the cloven foot already. [*Aſide.*] My brother's care I own; and to you, ſacred ſir, I confeſs, that the great crying ſin which I have long indulg'd, and now prepare to expiate, was love. 'My morning 'thoughts, my evening prayers, my daily muſings, 'nightly cares, was love! my preſent peace, my future 'bliſs, the joy of earth, and hopes of Heaven! I all 'contemn'd for love!'

Mir. She's downright ſtark mad in earneſt; death and confuſion, I have loſt her! [*Aſide.*] You confeſs your fault, madam, in ſuch moving terms, that I could almoſt be in love with the ſin.

Ori. Take care, ſir; crimes, like virtues, are their own rewards; my chief delight became my only grief; he in whoſe breaſt I thought my heart ſecure, turn'd robber, and deſpoil'd the treaſure that he kept.

Mir. Perhaps that treaſure he eſteems ſo much, that like the miſer, tho' afraid to uſe it, he reſerves it ſafe.

Ori.

Ori. No, holy father: who can be miſer in another's wealth, that's prodigal of his own? His heart was open, ſhar'd to all he knew, and what, alas! muſt then become of mine! But the ſame eyes that drew this paſſion in, ſhall ſend it out in tears, to which now hear my vow.—

Mir. [*Diſcovering himſelf.*] No, my fair angel, but let me repent; here on my knees behold the criminal, that vows repentance his. Ha! no concern upon her!

Ori. This turn is odd, and the time has been, that ſuch a ſudden change wou'd have ſurpris'd me into ſome confuſion.

'*Mir.* Reſtore that happy time, for I am now re-'turn'd to myſelf, for I want but pardon to deſerve 'your favour, and here I'll fix till you relent and give it.

'*Ori.* Groveling, ſordid man; why would you act a 'thing to make you kneel, monarch in your pleaſures to 'be ſlave to your faults? Are all the conqueſts of your 'wand'ring ſway, your wit, your humour, fortune, all 'reduc'd to the baſe cringing of a bended knee? Servile 'and poor! Pray Heav'n this change be real. [*Aſide.*

'*Mir.* I come not here to juſtify my fault but my ſub-'miſſion, for tho' there be a meanneſs in this humble 'poſture, 'tis nobler ſtill to bend when juſtice calls, 'than to reſiſt conviction.

'*Ori.* No more—thy oft repeated violated words re-'proach my weak belief, 'tis the ſevereſt calumny to 'hear thee ſpeak; that humble poſture which once cou'd 'raiſe, now mortifies my pride; how can'ſt thou hope 'for pardon from one that you affront by aſking it?

'*Mir.* [*Riſes.*] In my own cauſe I'll plead no more, but 'give me leave to intercede for you againſt the hard in-'junctions of that habit, which for my fault you wear.

'*Ori.* Surpriſing inſolence! My greateſt foe, pretends 'to give me counſel; but I am too warm upon ſo cool 'a ſubject. My reſolutions, ſir, are fix'd! but as our 'hearts were united with the ceremony of our eyes, ſo I 'ſhall ſpare ſome tears to the ſeparation. [*Weeps.*] That's 'all; farewel.

'*Mir.* And muſt I loſe her? No. [*Runs and catches her.*] 'Since all my prayers are vain, I'll uſe the nobler argu-'ment of man, and force you to the juſtice you refuſe; 'you're mine by pre-contract: and where's the vow ſo

'ſacred

'sacred to disannul another? I'll urge my love, your 'oath, and plead my cause 'gainst all monastic shifts 'upon the earth.

'*Ori.* Unhand me, ravisher! Wou'd you prophane 'these holy walls with violence? Revenge for all my past 'disgrace now offers, thy life shou'd answer this, wou'd 'I provoke the law: urge me no farther, but be gone.

'*Mir.* Inexorable woman, let me kneel again. [*Kneels.*'

Enter Old Mirabel.

Old Mir. Where, where's this counterfeit nun?

Ori. Madness! confusion! I'm ruin'd!

Mir. What do I hear? [*Puts on his hood.*] What did you say, sir!

Old Mir. I say she's a counterfeit, and you may be another for ought I know, sir; I have lost my child by these tricks, sir.

Mir. What tricks, sir?

Old Mir. By a pretended trick, sir. A contrivance to bring my son to reason, and it has made him stark mad; I have lost him and a thousand pound a year.

Mir. [*Discovering himself.*] My dear father, I'm your most humble servant.

Old Mir. My dear boy, [*Runs and kisses him.*] 'Welcome '*ex inferis*, my dear boy,' 'tis all a trick, she's no more a nun than I am.

Mir. No!

Old Mir. The devil a bit.

Mir. Then kiss me again, my dear dad, for the most happy news—And now most venerable holy sister. [*Kneels.*

Your mercy and your pardon I implore,
For the offence of asking it before.

Look'e, my dear counterfeiting nun, take my advice, be a nun in good earnest; women make the best nuns always when they can't do otherwise. 'Ah my dear fa-'ther, there is a merit in your son's behaviour that you 'little think; the free deportment of such fellows as I, 'makes more ladies religious, than all the pulpits in '*France.*'

Ori. O! Sir, how unhappily have you destroy'd what was so near perfection! He is the counterfeit that has deceiv'd you.

Old

Old Mir. Ha! Look'e, sir, I recant, she is a nun.

Mir. Sir, your humble servant, then I'm a friar this moment.

Old Mir. Was ever an old fool so banter'd by a brace o' young ones; hang you both, you're both counterfeits, and my plot's spoil'd, that's all. [*Exit.*

Ori. Shame and confusion, love, anger, and disappointment, will work my brain to madness.

[*Takes off her habit.* Exit.

Mir. Ay, ay, throw by the rags, they have serv'd a turn for us both, and they shall e'en go off together.

[*Takes off his habit.*

'Thus the sick wretch, when tortur'd by his pain,
'And finding all essays for life are vain;
'When the physician can no more design,
'Then call the other doctor, the divine.
'What vows to Heaven, wou'd Heaven restore his health!
'Vows all to Heaven, his thoughts, his actions, wealth:
'But if restor'd to vigour as before,
'His health refuses what his sickness swore.
'The body is no sooner rais'd and well,
'But the weak soul relapses into ill;
'To all its former swing of life is led,
'And leaves its vows and promises in bed.'

[Exit, *throwing away the habit.*

SCENE *changes to Old* Mirabel's *house:* Duretete *with a letter.*

Dur. [*Reads.*]

MY rudeness was only a proof of your humour, which I have found so agreeable, that I own myself penitent, and willing to make any reparation upon your first appearance to

BISARRE.

Mirabel swears she loves me, and this confirms it; then farewel gallantry, and welcome revenge; 'tis my turn now to be upon the sublime, I'll take her off, I warrant her.

Enter Bisarre.

Well, mistress, do you love me?

Bis. I hope, sir, you will pardon the modesty of—

Dur. Of what? of a dancing devil!——Do you love me, I say?

Bis.

Bif. Perhaps I—

Dur. What?

Bif. Perhaps I do not.

Dur. Ha! abus'd again! Death, woman, I'll——

Bif. Hold, hold, ſir, I do, I do!

Dur. Confirm it then by your obedience, ſtand there; and ogle me now, as if your heart, blood and ſoul were like to fly out at your eyes——Firſt, the direct ſurpriſe [*She looks full upon him.*] Right; next the *Deux yeux par oblique.* [*She gives him the ſide glance,*] Right; now depart, and languiſh. [*She turns from him and looks over her ſhoulder.* Very well; now ſigh. [*She ſighs.*] Now drop your fan on purpoſe. [*She drops her fan.*] Now take it up again: Come now, confeſs your faults; are not you a proud—ſay after me.

Bif. Proud.

Dur. Impertinent.

Bif. Impertinent.

Dur. Ridiculous.

Bif. Ridiculous.

Dur. Flirt.

Bif. Puppy.

Dur. Zoons! Woman, don't provoke me, we are alone, and you don't know but the devil may tempt me to do you a miſchief; aſk my pardon immediately.

Bif. I do, ſir, I only miſtook the word.

Dur. Cry then, have you got e'er a handkerchief?

Bif. Yes, ſir.

Dur. Cry then, handſomely; cry like a queen in a tragedy. [*She pretending to cry, burſts out a laughing, and enter two ladies laughing.*

Bif. Ha, ha, ha!

Ladies both. Ha, ha, ha!

Dur. Hell broke looſe upon me, and all the furies flutter'd about my ears! Betray'd again?

Bif. That you are upon my word, my dear captain; ha, ha, ha!

Dur. The Lord deliver me.

1 *Lady.* What! Is this the mighty man with the bull-face that comes to frighten ladies? I long to ſee him angry; come begin.

Dur. Ah, madam, I'm the beſt natur'd fellow in the world.

2 *Lady.*

2 *Lady*. A man! we're miſtaken, a man has manners; the aukward creature is ſome tinker's trull in a periwig.

Bif. Come, ladies, let's examine him.

[*They lay hold on him.*

Dur. Examine! the devil you will!

Bif. I'll lay my life, ſomé great dairy maid in man's clothes.

Dur. They will do't;—look'e, dear chriſtian women, pray hear me.

Bif. Will you ever attempt a lady's honour again?

Dur. If you pleaſe to let me get away with my honour, I'll do any thing in the world.

Bif. Will you perſuade your friend to marry mine?

Dur. O yes, to be ſure.

Bif. And will you do the ſame by me?

Dur. Burn me if I do, if the coaſt be clear. [*Runs out.*

Bif. Ha, ha, ha! the viſit, ladies, was critical for our diverſions, we'll go make an end of our tea. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mirabel *and Old* Mirabel.

Mir. Your patience, ſir, I tell you I won't marry; and tho' you ſend all the biſhops in *France* to perſuade me, I ſhall never believe their doctrine againſt their practice.

Old Mir. But will you diſobey your father, ſir?

Mir. Wou'd my father have his youthful ſon lie lazing here, bound to a wife, chain'd like a monkey to make ſport to a woman, ſubject to her whims, humours, longings, vapours, and caprices, 'to have her one day 'pleas'd, to-morrow peeviſh, the next day mad, the 'fourth rebellious; and nothing but this ſucceſſion of 'impertinence for ages together.' Be merciful, ſir, to your own fleſh and blood.

Old Mir. But, ſir, did not I bear all this, why ſhould not you?

Mir. Then thou think that marriage, like treaſon, ſhall attaint the whole body; pray conſider, ſir, is it reaſonable becauſe you throw yourſelf down from one ſtory, that I muſt caſt myſelf headlong from the garret window? You wou'd compel me to that ſtate, which I have heard you curſe yourſelf, when my mother and you have battled it for a whole week together.

Old Mir. Never but once, you rogue, and that was when ſhe long'd for ſix *Flanders* mares: ay, ſir, then ſhe

she was breeding of you, which shew'd what an expensive dog I should have of you.

Enter Petit.

Well, *Petit*, how does she now?

Pet. Mad, sir, *con pompos*—Ay, Mr. *Mirabel*, you'll believe that I speak truth, now when I confess that I have told you hitherto nothing but lies; our jesting is come to a sad earnest, she's downright distracted.

Enter Bisarre.

Bis. Where is this mighty victor!——The great exploit is done; go triumph in the glory of your conquest, inhuman, barbarous man! O Sir, [*To the old gentleman*] your wretched ward has found a tender guardian of you, where her young innocence expected protection, here has she found her ruin.

Old. Mir. Ay the fault is mine, for I believe that rogue won't marry, for fear of begetting such another disobedient son as his father did. I have done all I can, madam, and now can do no more than run mad for company. [*Cries.*

Enter Dugard *with his sword drawn.*

Dug. Away! Revenge, revenge.

Old Mir. Patience, patience, sir. [*Old* Mir. *holds him.*

Bob, draw. [*Aside.*

Dug. Patience! The coward's virtue, and the brave man's failing, when thus provok'd—Villain!

Mir. Your sister's frenzy shall excuse your madness; and to shew my concern for what she suffers, I'll bear the villain from her brother—Put up your anger with your sword; I have a heart like your's, that swells at an affront receiv'd, but melts at an injury given; and if the lovely *Oriana's* grief be such a moving scene, 'twill find a part within this breast, perhaps as tender as a brother's.

Dug. To prove that soft compassion for her grief, endeavour to remove it.—There, there, behold an object that's infective; I cannot view her, but I am as mad as she: [*Enter* Oriana, *held by two maids who put her in a chair.*]

chair.] A ſiſter that my dying parents left, with their laſt words and bleſſing to my care. Siſter, deareſt ſiſter. [*Goes to her.*

Old Mir. Ay, poor child, poor child, d'ye know me?

Ori. You! you are *Amadis de Gaul*, ſir;—Oh! oh my heart! Were you never in love, fair lady? And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?—I dream of walking fires, and tall gigantic ſights. Take heed, it comes now—What's that? Pray ſtand away: I have ſeen that face ſure.—How light my head is!

Mir. What piercing charms has beauty, ev'n in madneſs! 'theſe ſudden ſtarts of undigeſted words ſhoot thro' 'my ſoul, with more perſuaſive force than all the ſtu-'died art of labour'd eloquence.'—Come, madam, try to repoſe a little.

Ori. I cannot; for I muſt be up to go to church, and I muſt dreſs me, put on my new gown, and be ſo fine, to meet my love. Hey ho!——Will not you tell me where my heart lies buried?

Mir. My very ſoul is touch'd—Your hand, my fair.

Ori. How ſoft and gentle you feel? I'll tell you your fortune, friend.

Mir. How ſhe ſtares upon me!

Ori. You have a flattering face; but 'tis a fine one—I warrant you have five hundred miſtreſſes—Ay, to be ſure, a miſtreſs for every guinea in his pocket——Will you pray for me? I ſhall die to-morrow—And will you ring my paſſing-bell?

Mir. O woman, woman, of artifice created! whoſe nature, even diſtracted, has a cunning: In vain let man his ſenſe, his learning boaſt, when woman's madneſs over rules his reaſon. Do you know me injur'd creature?

Ori. No—but you ſhall be my intimate acquaintance—in the grave. [*Weeps.*

Mir. O tears, I muſt believe you; ſure there's a kind of ſympathy in madneſs: for even I, obdurate as I am, do feel my ſoul ſo toſs'd with ſtorms of paſſion, that I could cry for help as well as ſhe.— [*Wipes his eyes.*

Ori. What have you loſt your lover? No, you mock me; I'll go home and pray.

Mir. Stay, my fair innocence, and hear me own my love so loud, that I may call your senses to their place, restore 'em to their charming happy functions, and reinstate myself into your favour.

Bis. Let her alone, sir, 'tis all too late; she trembles, hold her, her fits grow stronger by her talking; don't trouble her, she don't know you, sir.

Old Mir. Not know him! what then? she loves to see him for all that.

Enter Duretete.

Dur. Where are you all? What the devil! melancholy, and I here! Are ye sad, and such a ridiculous subject, such a very good jest among you as I am?

Mir. Away with this impertinence; this is no place for bagatel: I have murder'd my honour, destroy'd a lady, and my desire of reparation is come at length too late: see there.

Dur. What ails her?

Mir. Alas! she's mad.

Dur. Mad! do'st wonder at that? By this light, they're all so; they're cozening mad; they're brawling mad; they're proud mad; I just now came from a whole world of mad women, that had almost—What is she dead?

Mir. Dead! Heav'ns forbid.

Dur. Heav'ns further it; for till they be as cold as a key, there's no trusting them; you're never sure that a woman's in earnest, 'till she is nail'd in her coffin. Shall I talk to her? Are you mad, mistress?

Bis. What's that to you, sir?

Dur. Oons, madam, are you there! [*Runs off*

Mir. Away, thou wild buffoon; how poor and mean this humour now appears? 'His follies and my own I here disclaim;' this lady's frenzy has restor'd my senses, and was she perfect now, as once she was (before ye all I speak it) she should be mine; and as she is, my tears and prayers shall wed her.

Dug. How happy had this declaration been some hours ago.

Bis. Sir, she beckons to you, and waves us to go off; come, come, let's leave 'em [*Ex. omnes, but* Mir. *and* Ori.

Ori. O sir.

Mir.

Mir. Speak, my charming angel, if your dear ſenſes have regain'd their order; ſpeak, fair, and bleſs me with the news.

Ori. Firſt, let me bleſs the cunning of my ſex, that happy counterfeited frenzy that has reſtor'd to my poor labouring breaſt the deareſt, beſt belov'd of men.

Mir. Tune all ye ſpheres, your inſtruments of joy, and carry round your ſpacious orbs, the happy ſound of *Oriana*'s health; her ſoul, whoſe harmony was next to yours, is now in tune again; the counterfeiting fair has play'd the fool.

She was ſo mad to counterfeit for me;
I was ſo mad to pawn my liberty:
But now we both are well, and both are free.

Ori. How, ſir, free!

Mir. As air, my dear bedlamite; what, marry a lunatick! Look ye, my dear, you have counterfeited madneſs ſo very well this bout, that you'll be apt to play the fool all your life long——Here, gentlemen.

Ori. Monſter! you won't diſgrace me.

Mir. O' my faith, but I will; here, come in gentlemen.—A miracle! a miracle! the woman's diſpoſſeſs'd, the devil's vaniſh'd.

Enter Old Mirabel *and* Dugard.

Old Mir. Bleſs us, was ſhe poſſeſs'd?

Mir. With the worſt of demons, ſir, a marriage-devil, a horrid devil. Mr. *Dugard*, don't be ſurpriz'd, I promis'd my endeavours to cure your ſiſter; no mad doctor in Chriſtendom could have done it more effectually. Take her into your charge; and have a care ſhe don't relapſe; if ſhe ſhould, employ me not again, for I am no more infallible than others of the faculty; I do cure ſometimes.

Ori. Your remedy, moſt barbarous man, will prove the greateſt poiſon to my health; for tho' my former frenzy was but counterfeit, I now ſhall run into a real madneſs. [*Exit* Old Mir. *after*.

Dug. This was a turn beyond my knowledge; I'm ſo confus'd, I know not how to reſent it. [*Exit*.

Mir. What a dangerous precipice have I escap'd? Was not I just now upon the brink of destruction?

Enter Duretete.

O my friend, let me run into thy bosom; no lark, escap'd from the devouring pounces of a hawk, quakes with more dismal apprehension.

Dur. The matter, man!

Mir. Marriage, hanging; I was just at the gallows-foot, the running noose about my neck, and the cart wheeling from me.—Oh—I shan't be myself this month again.

Dur. Did not I tell you so? They are all alike, saints or devils: their counterfeiting can't be reputed a deceit, for 'tis the nature of the sex, not their contrivance.

Mir. Ay, ay: there's no living here with security; this house is so full of stratagem and design, that I must abroad again.

Dur. With all my heart, I'll bear thee company, my lad; I'll meet you at the play; and we'll set out for *Italy* to-morrow morning.

Mir. A match; I'll go pay my compliment of leave to my father presently.

Dur. I'm afraid he'll stop you.

Mir. What pretend a command over me after his settlement of a thousand pound a year upon me? No, no, he has pass'd away his authority with the conveyance; the will of a living father is chiefly obeyed for the sake of the dying one.

'What makes the world attend and croud the great?
'Hopes, interest, and dependence, make their state:
'Behold the anti-chamber fill'd with beaux,
'A horse's levee throng'd with courtly crows.
'Tho' grumbling subjects make the crown their sport,
'Hopes of a place will bring the sparks to court.
'Dependence, ev'n a father's sway secures,
'For tho' the son rebels, the heir is yours.' [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE, *the Street before the Play-House.*

Mirabel *and* Duretete *as coming from the Play.*

Dur. HOW d'ye like this play?

Mir. I lik'd the company; the lady, the rich beauty in the front-box had my attention: these impudent poets bring the ladies together to support them, and to kill every body else.

For deaths upon the stage the ladies cry,
But ne'er mind us that in the audience die:
'The poet's hero should not move their pain,
'But they shou'd weep for those their eyes have slain.'

Dur. Hoyty, toyty; did *Phillis* inspire you with all this?

Mir. Ten times more; the play-house is the element of poetry, because the region of beauty; the ladies, methinks, have a more triumphant air in the boxes than any where else, they sit commanding on their thrones with all their subject slaves about them: their best clothes, best looks, shining jewels, sparkling eyes, the treasure of the world in a ring. Then there's such a hurry of pleasure to transport us; the bustle, noise, gallantry, 'equipage, garters, feathers, wigs,' bows, smiles, ogles, love, music, and applause: I could wish that my whole life long were the first night of a new play.

Dur. The fellow has quite forgot this journey; have you bespoke post horses?

Mir. Grant me but three days, dear captain, one to discover the lady, one to unfold myself, and one to make me happy; and then I'm yours to the world's end.

Dur. Hast thou the impudence to promise thyself a lady of her figure and quality in so short a time?

Mir. Yes, sir—I have a confident address, no disagreeable person, and five hundred lewis d'ors in my pocket.

Dur. Five hundred lewis d'ors! You a'n't mad?

Mir. I tell you, she's worth five thousand; one of her black brilliant eyes is worth a diamond as big as her head. 'I compar'd her necklace with her looks, and the living 'jewels out-sparkled the dead ones by a million.'

Dur. But you have own'd to me, that abating *Oriana*'s pretensions to marriage, you lov'd her passionately; then how can you wander at this rate?

Mir. I long'd for a partridge t'other day off the king's plate, but d'ye think, because I could not have it, I must eat nothing.

Dur. Prithee, *Mirabel*, be quiet; you may remember what narrow 'scapes you have had abroad by following strangers; you forget your leap out of the Courtesan's window at *Bologna*, to save your fine ring there.

Mir. My ring's a trifle, there's nothing we possess comparable to what we desire——be shy of a lady bare-fac'd in the front-box with a thousand pounds in jewels about her neck! For shame, no more.

Enter Oriana *in Boy's Clothes with a Letter.*

Ori. Is your name, *Mirabel*, sir?

Mir. Yes, sir.

Ori. A letter from your uncle in *Picardy*.

[*Gives the letter.*

Mir. [*Reads.*]

THE bearer is the son of a Protestant gentleman, who flying for his religion, left me the charge of this youth, [*a pretty boy.*] *He's fond of some handsome service that may afford him opportunity of improvement; your care of him will oblige* Your's.

Has't a mind to travel child?

Ori. 'Tis my desire, sir; I should be pleas'd to serve a traveller in any capacity.

Mir. A hopeful inclination; you shall along with me into *Italy*, as my page.

Dur. 'I don't think it safe, the rogue's [*Noise without.*] too handsome.'——The play's done, and some of the ladies come this way.

Enter Lamorce, *with her train born up by a Page.*

Mir. Duretete, the very dear, identical she.

Dur. And what then?

Mir.

Mir. Why 'tis she.

Dur. And what then, sir?

Mir. Then! Why—— Look'e, sirrah, the first piece of service I put on you, is to follow that lady's coach, and bring me word where she lives. [*To* Oriana.

Ori. I don't know the town, sir, and am afraid of losing myself.

Mir. Pshaw.

Lam. Page, what's become of all my people?

Page. I can't tell, madam, I can see no sign of your ladyship's coach.

Lam. That fellow is got into his old pranks, and fall'n drunk somewhere; none of the footmen there?

Page. Not one, madam.

Lam. These servants are the plague of our lives, what shall I do?

Mir. By all my hopes, fortune pimps for me; now *Duretete* for a piece of gallantry.

Dur. Why you won't sure?

Mir. Won't, brute! Let not your servants neglect, madam, put your ladyship to any inconvenience, for you can't be disappointed of an equipage whilst mine waits below; and wou'd you honour, the master so far, he would be proud to pay his attendance.

Dur. Ay to be sure. [*Aside.*

Lam. Sir, I won't presume to be troublesome, for my habitation is a great way off.

Dur. Very true, madam, and he's a little engag'd, besides, madam, a hackey-coach will do as well, madam.

Mir. Rude beast, be quiet! [*To* Duretete.] The farther from home, madam, the more occasion you have for a guard—pray, madam—

Lam. Lard, sir.—[*He seems to press, she to decline it in dumb shew.*

Dur. Ah! the devil's in his impudence; now he wheedles, she smiles; he flatters, she simpers; he swears, she believes; he's a rogue, and she's a w— in a moment.

Mir. Without there! my coach; *Duretete*, wish me joy. [*Hands the Lady out.*

Dur. Wish you a surgeon! Here you little *Picard*, go follow your master, and he'll lead you——

Ori. Whither, ſir?

Dur. To the academy, child: 'tis the faſhion, with men of quality, to teach their pages their exerciſes—go.

Ori. Won't you go with him too, ſir; that woman may do him ſome harm, I don't like her.

Dur. Why, how now Mr. *Page*, do you ſtart up to give laws of a ſudden; do you pretend to riſe at court, and diſapprove the pleaſure of your betters: Look'e, ſirrah, if ever you wou'd riſe by a great man, be ſure to be with him in his little actions, and, as a ſtep to your advancement, follow your maſter immediately, and make it your hope that he goes to a bawdy-houſe.

Ori. Heav'ns forbid. [*Exit.*

Dug. Now wou'd I ſooner take a cart in company of the hangman, than a coach with that woman: what a ſtrange antipathy have I taken againſt theſe creatures; a woman to me is averſion upon averſion, a cheeſe, a cat, a breaſt of mutton, the ſqualling of children, the grinding of knives, and the ſnuff of a candle. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *a handſome apartment.*

Enter Mirabel *and* Lamorce.

Lam. To convince me, ſir, that your ſervice was ſomething more than good breeding, pleaſe to lay out an hour of your company upon my deſire, as you have already upon my neceſſity.

Mir. Your deſire, madam, has only prevented my requeſt: my hours! make 'em yours, madam, eleven twelve, one, two, three, and all that belong to thoſe happy minutes.

Lam. But I muſt trouble you, ſir, to diſmiſs your retinue, becauſe an equipage at my door, at this time of night, will not be conſiſtent with my reputation.

Mir. By all means, madam, all but one little boy—Here, *Page*, [*Enter* Oriana] order my coach and ſervants home, and do you ſtay; 'tis a fooliſh country boy, that knows nothing but innocence. [*Exit* Oriana.

Lam. Innocence, ſir? I ſhould be ſorry if you made any ſiniſter conſtructions of my freedom.

Mir. O madam, I muſt not pretend to remark upon any body's freedom, having ſo entirely forfeited my own.

Lam.

Lam. Well, sir, 'twere convenient towards our easy correspondence, that we enter'd into a free confidence of each other, by a mutual declaration of what we are, and what we think of one another.—Now, sir what are you?

Mir. In three words, madam,—I am am a gentleman, I have five hundred pounds in my pocket, and a clean shirt on.

Lam. And your name is ———

Mir. Mustapha. ——Now, madam, the inventory of your fortunes.

Lam. My name is *Lamorce*; my birth noble; I was married young, to a proud, rude, sullen, impetuous fellow; the husband spoiled the gentlemen; crying ruin'd my face, 'till at last I took heart, leap'd out of a window, got away to my friends, su'd my tyrant, and recovered my fortune——I liv'd from fifteen to twenty to please a husband; from twenty to forty I'm resolv'd to please myself, and from thence upwards I'll humour the world.

'*Mir.* The charming wild notes of a bird broke out 'of its cage.

'*Lam.* I mark'd you at the play, and something I saw 'of a well-furnish'd, careless, agreeable tour about you. 'Methought your eyes made their mannerly demands 'with such an arch modesty, that I don't know how—'but I'm elop'd. Ha, ha, ha! I'm elop'd.'

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! I rejoice in your good fortune with all my heart.

Lam. O, now I think on't, Mr. *Mustapha*, you have got the finest ring there, I cou'd scarcely believe it right; pray let me see it.

Mir. Hum! Yes, madam, 'tis, 'tis right—but, but, but, but, but, it was given me by my mother, an old family ring, madam, an old-fashion'd family-ring.

Lam. Ay, sir—If you can entertain yourself 'with a song' for a moment, I'll wait on you immediately; 'come 'in there. [*Exit.*

'*Enter* Singers.

'Call what you please, sir.

'*Mir.* The new song.——*Prithee*, Phillis,

'SONG.'

Mir. Certainly the ſtars have been in a ſtrange intriguing humour when I was born—Ay, this night ſhou'd I have had a bride in my arms, and that I ſhou'd like well enough: But what ſhou'd I have to-morrow night? The ſame. And what next night? The ſame. And what next night? The very ſame: Soup for breakfaſt, ſoup for dinner, ſoup for ſupper, and ſoup for breakfaſt again—But here's variety.

'I love the fair who freely gives her heart,
'That's mine by ties of nature, not of art;
'Who boldly owns whate'er her thoughts indite,
'And is too modeſt for a hypocrite.'

[Lamorce *appears at the door, as he runs towards her, four Bravoes ſtep in before her. He ſtarts back.*
She comes, ſhe comes—Hum, hum—Bitch—Murder'd, murder'd to be ſure? The curſed ſtrumpet! To make me ſend away my ſervants—Nobody near me! Theſe cut-throats always make ſure work. What ſhall I do? I have but one way. [*Aſide*] Are theſe gentlemen your relations, madam?

Lam. Yes, ſir.

Mir. Gentlemen your moſt humble ſervant; ſir, your moſt faithful, yours, ſir, with all my heart; your moſt obedient—come, gentlemen, [*Salutes all round*] pleaſe to ſit—no ceremony, next the lady, pray ſir.

Lam. Well, ſir, and how d'ye like my friends?

[*They all ſit.*

Mir. O, madam, the moſt finiſh'd gentlemen! I was never more happy in good company in all my life; I ſuppoſe, ſir, you have travell'd?

1 *Bra.* Yes, ſir.

Mir. Which way, may I preſume?

1 *Bra.* In a weſtern barge, ſir.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! very pretty; facetious pretty gentleman!

Lam. Ha, ha, ha! ſir, you have got the prettieſt ring upon you finger there———

Mir. Ah? madam, 'tis at your ſervice with all my heart. [*Offering the ring.*

Lam.

Lam. By no meaus, ſir, a family ring! [*Takes it.*

Mir. No matter, madam. Seven hundred pounds by this light. [*Aſide.*

2 *Bra.* Pray, ſir, what's o'clock?

Mir. Hum! Sir, I have left my watch at home.

2 *Brav.* I thought I ſaw the ſtring of it juſt now—

Mir. Ods my life, ſir, I beg your pardon, here it is —but it don't go. [*Putting it up.*

Lam. O dear ſir, an *Engliſh* watch! *Tompion*'s I preſume.

Mir. D'ye like it, madam—no ceremony——'tis at your ſervice with all my heart and ſoul——*Tompion*'s! Hang ye. [*Aſide.*

1 *Bra.* But, ſir, above all things, I admire the faſhion and make of your ſword-hilt.

Mir. I'm mighty glad you like it, ſir.

1 *Bra.* Will you part with it, ſir?

Mir. Sir, I won't ſell it.

1 *Bra.* Not ſell it, ſir!

Mir. No, gentlemen,——but I'll beſtow it with all my heart. [*Offering it.*

1 *Bra.* O, ſir, we ſhall rob you.

Mir. That you do I'll be ſworn. [*Aſide.*] I have another at home; pray, ſir,—Gentlemen you're too modeſt, have I any thing elſe that you fancy —' Sir, will you 'do me a favour?' [*To the* 1*ſt Bravo.*] I am extremely in love with that wig which you wear, will you do me the favour to change with me?

1 *Bra.* Look'e, ſir, this is a family wig, and I wou'd not part with it, but if you like it——

Mir. Sir your moſt humble ſervant. [*They change wigs.*

1 *Bra.* Madam, your moſt humble ſlave.

[*Goes up ſoppiſhly to the Lady, ſalutes her.*

2 *Bra.* The fellow's very liberal; ſhall we murder him?

1 *Bra.* What! Let him 'ſcape to hang us all! And I to loſe my wig; no, no! I want but a handſome pretence to quarrel with him, for you know we muſt act like gentlemen. 'Here, ſome wine'—[*Wine here.*] Sir your good health. [*Pulls* Mirabel *by the noſe.*

Mir. Oh! ſir, your moſt humble ſervant; a pleaſant frolic enough, to drink a man's health, and pull him

by the nose: ha, ha, ha, the pleasanteſt pretty-humour'd gentleman.

'*Lam.* Help the gentleman to a glaſs,' [Mir *drinks.*

1 *Bra.* How d'ye like the wine, ſir?

Mir. Very good o' the kind, ſir: But I tell ye what; I find we're all inclin'd to be frolicſome, and I'gad, for my own part, I was never more diſpoſed to be merry; let's make a night on't, ha!—This wine is pretty, but I have ſuch *Burgundy* at home.—Look'e, gentlemen, let me ſend for half a dozen flaſks of my *Burgundy*, I defy *France* to match it;—'Twill make us all life, all air, pray, gentlemen.

2 *Bra.* Eh! Shall us have his *Burgundy!*

1 *Bra.* Yes, faith, we'll have all we can; here call up the gentleman's ſervant—What think you, *Lamorce?*

Lam. Yes, yes,——your ſervant is a fooliſh country boy, ſir, he underſtands nothing but innocence.

Mir. Ay, ay, madam.—Here, *Page,* [*Enter* Oriana.] take this key, and go to my butler, order him to ſend half a dozen flaſks of the red *Burgundy*, mark'd a thouſand; and be ſure you make haſte, I long to entertain my friends here, my very good friends.

Omnes. Ah, dear, ſir!

1. *Bra.* Here, child, take a glaſs of wine—Your maſter and I have chang'd wigs, honey, in a frolic. Where had you this pretty boy, honeſt *Muſtapha?*

Ori. Muſtapha!

Mir. Out of *Picardy*—— this is the firſt errand he has made for me, and if he does it right, I'll encourage him.

Ori. The red *Burgundy*, ſir.

Mir. The red, mark'd a thouſand, and be ſure you make haſte.

Ori. I ſhall, ſir. [*Exit.*

1 *Bra.* Sir you were pleas'd to like my wig, have you any fancy for my coat?—Look'e, ſir, it has ſerv'd a great many honeſt gentlemen very faithfully.

Mir. Not ſo faithfully, for I'm afraid it has got a ſcurvy trick of leaving all it's maſters in neceſſity.—The inſolence of theſe dogs is beyond their cruelty. [*Aſide.*

Lam. You're melancholy, ſir.

Mir. Only concern'd, madam, that I ſhou'd have no ſervant here but this little boy——he'll make ſome con-

founded

founded blunder, I'll lay my life on't, I wou'd not be diſappointed of my wine for the univerſe.

Lam. He'll do well enough, ſir; but ſupper's ready, will you pleaſe to eat a bit, ſir?

Mir. O, madam, I never had a better ſtomach in my life.

Lam. Come then,—we have nothing but a plate of ſoup.

Mir. Ah! the marriage-ſoup I cou'd diſpenſe with now. [*Aſide.*] [*Exit, handing the lady.*

2 *Bra.* That wig won't fall to your ſhare.

1 *Bra.* No, no, we'll ſettle that after ſupper, in the mean time the gentleman ſhall wear it.

2 *Bra.* Shall we diſpatch him?

3 *Bra.* To be ſure. I think he knows me.

1 *Bra.* Ay, ay, dead men tell no tales; I wonder at the impudence of the *Engliſh* rogues, that will hazard the meeting a man at the bar whom they have encounter'd upon the road! I ha'nt the confidence to look a man in the face after I have done him an injury, therefore we'll murder him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to Old* Mirabel's *houſe.*

Enter Duretete.

Dur. My friend has forſaken me, I have abandon'd my miſtreſs, my time lies heavy upon my hands, and my money burns in my pocket—But now I think on't, my myrmidons are upon duty to-night; I'll fairly ſtrole down to the guard, and nod away the night with my honeſt lieutenant over a flaſk of wine, a rake-helly ſtory, and a pipe of tobacco. [*Going off,* Biſ. *meets him.*

Biſ. Who comes there? ſtand!

Dur. Hey day, now ſhe's turn'd dragoon.

Biſ. Look'e, ſir, I'm told you intend to travel again. —I deſign to wait on you as far as *Italy.*

Dur. Then I'll travel into *Wales.*

Biſ. Wales! What country's that?

Dur. The land of mountains, child, where you're never out of the way, 'cauſe there's no ſuch thing as a high road.

Biſ. Rather always in a high-road, 'cauſe you travel all upon hills;—but be't as it will, I'll jog along with you.

Dur. But we intend to ſail to the *Eaſt-Indies.*

Biſ.

Bif. *Eaſt* or *Weſt*, 'tis all one to me; I'm tight and light, and the fitter for ſailing.

Dur. But ſuppoſe we take thro' *Germany*, and drink hard.

Bif. Suppoſe I take thro' *Germany*, and drink harder than you.

Dur. Suppoſe I go to a bawdy-houſe.

Bif. Suppoſe I ſhew you the way.

Dur. 'Sdeath, woman, will you go to the guard with me, and ſmoak a pipe?

Bif. *Allons donc!*

Dur. The devil's in the woman;——ſuppoſe I hang myſelf.

Bif. There I'll leave you.

Dur. And a happy riddance, the gallows is welcome.

Bif. Hold, hold, Sir [*Catches him by the arm going.*] one word before we part.

Dur. Let me go, madam,———or I ſhall think that you're a man, and perhaps may examine you.

Bif. Stir if you dare; I have ſtill ſpirits to attend me; and can raiſe ſuch a muſter of fairies as ſhall puniſh you to death—Come, ſir, ſtand there now and ogle me: [*He frowns upon her.*] Now a languiſhing ſigh! [*He groans.*] Now run and take my fan,———faſter. [*He runs and takes it up.*] Now play with it handſomely.

Dur. Ay, ay. [*He tears it all in pieces.*

Bif. Hold, hold, dear humourous coxcomb; Captain, ſpare my fan, and I'll—Why, you rude, inhuman monſter, don't you expect to pay for this?

Dur. Yes, madam, there's twelve pence; for that is the price on't.

Bif. Sir, it coſt a guinea.

Dur. Well, madam, you ſhall have the ſticks again. [*Throws them to her, and* Exit.

Bif. Ha, ha, ha! ridiculous below my concern. I muſt follow him however, to know if he can give me any news of *Oriana*. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to* Lamorce's *Lodgings.*

Enter Mirabel *ſolus.*

Mir. Bloody hell-hounds, I over-heard you:——Was not I two hours ago the happy, gay, rejoicing *Mirabel?*

bel? How did I plume my hopes in a fair coming proſpect of a long ſcene of years? Life courted me with all the charms of vigour, youth, and fortune; and to be torn away from all my promiſed joys is more than death; the manner too, by villains.—O my *Oriana*, this very moment might have bleſs'd me in thy arms, and my poor boy! the innocent boy!—Confuſion!—But huſh, they come: I muſt diſſemble ſtill—No news of my wine, gentlemen?

Enter the four Bravoes.

1 *Bra.* No, ſir, I believe your country-booby has loſt himſelf, and we can wait no longer for't:——True, ſir, you're a pleaſant gentleman, but I ſuppoſe you underſtand our buſineſs.

Mir. Sir, I may go near to gueſs at your employments; you, ſir, are a lawyer, I preſume, you a phyſician, you a ſcrivener, and you a ſtock-jobber.—All cut throats, I-gad. [*Aſide.*

4 *Bra.* Sir, I am a broken officer; I was caſhier'd at the head of the army for a coward: ſo I took up the trade of murder to retrieve the reputation of my courage.

3 *Bra.* I am a ſoldier too, and wou'd ſerve my king, but I don't like the quarrel, and I have more honour than to fight in a bad cauſe.

2 *Bra.* I was bred a gentleman, and have no eſtate, but I muſt have my whore and my bottle, thro' the prejudice of education.

1 *Bra.* I am a ruffian too, by the prejudice of education, I was bred a butcher. In ſhort, ſir, if your wine had come, we might have trifled a little longer.—Come, ſir, which ſword will you fall by? mine, ſir?

2 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*

3 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*

4 *Bra.* Or mine? [*draws.*

Mir. I ſcorn to beg my life; but to be butcher'd thus! [*knocking*] O there's the wine:——this moment for my life or death.

Enter Oriana.

'Loſt, forever loſt!'—Where's the wine, child? [*faintly.*

Ori. Coming up, ſir. [*Stamps.*]

Enter

Enter Duretete *with his sword drawn, and six of the grand 'musqueteers with their pieces presented, the Ruffians drop their swords.* [Oriana *goes off.*

Mir. The wine, the wine, the wine. Youth, pleasure, fortune, days and years, are now my own again.—Ah, my dear friends, did not I tell you this wine wou'd make me merry?—Dear captain, these gentlemen are the best natur'd, facetious, witty creatures, that ever you knew.

Enter Lamorce.

Lam. Is the wine come, sir?

Mir. O yes, madam, the wine is come——see there? [*Pointing to the soldiers.*] Your ladyship has got a very fine ring upon your finger.

Lam. Sir, 'tis at your service.

Mir. O ho! is it so? Thou dear seven hundred pound, thou'rt welcome home again, with all my heart—Ad's my life, madam, you have got the finest built watch there! *Tompion*'s, I presume.

Lam. Sir, you may wear it.

Mir. O, madam, by no means, 'tis too much—Rob you of all!—[*Taking it from her*] Good dear time, thou'rt a precious thing, I'm glad I have retriev'd thee: [*Putting it up*] What, my friends neglected all this while! Gentlemen, you'll pardon my complaisance to the lady.—How now—is it civil to be so out of humour at my entertainment, and I so pleased with yours? Captain, you're surpriſed at all this! but we're in our frolics, you must know.———Some wine here.

Enter Servant with wine.

Come, Captain, this worthy gentleman's health.

[*Tweaks the first* Bravo *by the nose; he roars.*

But now, where——where's my dear deliverer, my boy, my charming boy!

1 *Bra.* I hope some of our crew below-stairs have dispatch'd him.

Mir. Villain, what say'st thou? Dispatch'd! I'll have ye all tortured, rack'd, torn to pieces alive, if you have touch'd my boy.—Here, page! page! page! [*Runs out.*

Dur. Here, gentlemen, be sure you secure those fellows.

1 *Bra.* Yes, sir, we know you and your guard will be very civil to us.

Dur.

Dur. Now for you, madam;—He, he, he!—I'm so pleas'd to think that I shall be reveng'd of one woman before I die—Well, mistress *Snap Dragon*, which of these honourable gentlemen is so happy to call you wife?

1 *Bra.* Sir, she should have been mine to-night, 'cause *Sampre* here had her last night. Sir, she's very true to us all four.

Dur. Take 'em to justice. [*The guards carry off the* Brav.

Enter Old Mirabel, Dugard, Bisarre.

Old Mir. Robin, Robin, where's *Bob?* where's my boy?—What, is this the lady? a pretty whore, faith.---Hark'e, child, because my son was so civil as to oblige you with a coach, I'll treat with a cart, indeed I will.

Dug. Ay, madam,—and you shall have a swinging equipage, three or four thousand footmen at your heels at least.

Dur. No less becomes her quality.

Bis. Faugh! the monster!

Dur. Monster! ay, you're all a little monstrous, let me tell you.

Enter Mirabel.

Old Mir. Ah, my dear *Bob*, art thou safe, man?

Mir. No, no, sir, I'm ruin'd, the saver of my life is lost.

Old Mir. No, he came and brought us the news.

Mir. But where is he?—[*Enter* Oriana.] Ha! [*Runs and embraces her.*] My dear preserver, what shall I do to recompence your trust?—Father, friends, gentlemen, behold the youth that has reliev'd me from the most ignominious death, 'from the scandalous poniards of these 'bloody ruffians, where to have fall'n would have defam'd 'my memory with vile reproach.—My life, estate, my 'all, is due to such a favour'—Command me, child, before you all, before my late, so kind indulgent stars, I swear to grant whate'er you ask.

Ori. To the same stars indulgent now to me, I will appeal as to the justice of my claim; I shall demand but what was mine before——the just performance of your contract to *Oriana*. [*Discovering herself.*

Om. Oriana!

Ori. In this disguise I resolv'd to follow you abroad, counterfeited that letter that got me into your service; and so, by this strange turn of fate, I became the instrument

ment of your preſervation; 'few common ſervants wou'd 'have had ſuch cunning; my love inſpir'd me with the 'meaning of your meſſage, 'cauſe the concern for your 'ſafety made me ſuſpect your company.'

Dur. Mirabel you're caught.

Mir. Caught! I ſcorn the thought of impoſition, the 'tricks and artful cunning of the ſex I have deſpis'd, and 'broke thro' all contrivance. Caught! No, 'tis my vo-'luntary act: this was no human ſtratagem, but by my 'providential ſtars, deſign'd to ſhew the dangers wan-'dering youths incur by the purſuit of an unlawful love, 'to plunge me headlong in the ſnares of vice, and then 'to free me by the hands of virtue:' here, on my knees, I humbly beg my fair preſerver's pardon; my thanks are needleſs, for myſelf I owe. And now for ever do proteſt me yours.

Old Mir. Tall, all di dall. *(ſings.)* Kiſs me, daughter—no, you ſhall kiſs me firſt, *(To* Lamorce) for you're the cauſe on't. Well, *Biſarre*, what ſay you to the captain?

Biſ. I like the beaſt well enough, but I don't underſtand his paces ſo well as to venture him in a ſtrange road.

Old Mir. But marriage is ſo beaten a path that you can't go wrong.

Biſ. Ay, 'tis ſo beaten that the way is ſpoil'd.

Dur. There is but one thing ſhou'd make me thy huſband—I cou'd marry thee to-day for the privilege of beating thee to-morrow.

Biſ. And then——

Old Mir. Come, come, you may agree for all this, Mr. *Dugard*, are not you pleas'd with this?

Dug. So pleas'd, that if I thought it might ſecure your ſon's affection to my ſiſter, I wou'd double her fortune.

Mir. Fortune! has ſhe not given me mine? my life, eſtate, my all, and what is more, her virtuous ſelf.—Virtue, in this ſo advantageous light, has her own ſparkling charms, more tempting far than glittering gold or glory. Behold the foil *(Pointing to* Lamorce) that ſets this brightneſs off! *(To* Oriana.) Here view the pride *(To* Oriana.) and ſcandal of the ſex. *(To* Lamorce.) There (*To* Lam.) the falſe meteor, whoſe deluding light leads mankind to deſtruction. Here *(To* Oriana) the bright

bright ſhining ſtar that guides to a ſecurity of happineſs, a garden and a ſingle ſhe (*To* Oriana) was our firſt father's bliſs; the tempter (*To* Lam.) and to wander, was his curſe.

What liberty can be ſo tempting there, (*To* Lam.
As a ſoft, virtuous, am'rous bondage here? (*To* Ori.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SONG:

SINCE, Cœlia, *'tis not in our power*
To tell how long our lives may laſt,
Begin to love this very hour,
You've loſt too much in what is paſt.

For ſince the power we all obey,
Has in your breaſt my heart confin'd,
Let me my body to it lay,
In vain you'd part what natu re join'd.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

FROM Fletcher's *great original to day*
We took the hint of this our modern play;
Our author, from his lines, has ſtrove to paint
A witty, wild, inconſtant, free gallant:
With a gay ſoul, with ſenſe, and will to rove,
With language, and with ſoftneſs fram'd to move,
With little truth, but with a world of love.
Such forms on maids in morning ſlumbers wait,
When fancy firſt inſtructs their hearts to beat,
When firſt they wiſh, and ſigh for what they know not yet.
Frown not, ye fair, to think your lovers may
Reach your cold hearts by ſome unguarded way;
Let Villeroy's *misfortune make you wiſe,*
There's danger ſtill in darkneſs and ſurpriſe;
Tho' from his rampart he defy'd the foe,
Prince Eugene *found an aqueduct below.*
With eaſy freedom and a gay addreſs,
A preſſing lover ſeldom wants ſucceſs:
Whilſt the reſpectful, like the Greek, *ſits down,*
And waſtes a ten years ſiege before the town.
For her own ſake, let no forſaken maid,
Our wanderer, for want of love, upbraid;
Since 'tis a ſecret, none ſhou'd e'er confeſs,
That they have loſt the happy pow'r to pleaſe.
If you ſuſpect the rogue inclin'd to break,
Break firſt, and ſwear you've turn'd him off a week
As princes, when they reſty ſtateſmen doubt,
Before they can ſurrender, turn 'em out.
Whate'er you think, grave uſes may be made,
And much even for inconſtancy be ſaid.
Let the good man for marriage-rites deſign'd,
With ſtudious care, and diligence of mind,
Turn over every page of womankind;
Mark every ſenſe, and how the readings vary,
And, when he knows the worſt on't,—let him marry.

FINIS.

THE
CONSTANT COUPLE;
OR,
A TRIP TO THE JUBILEE.

A

COMEDY.

By MR. FARQUHAR.

Marked with the Variations in the

MANAGER's BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Sive favore tuli, sive hanc ego carmine famam;
Jure tibi grates, candide lector, ago.
Ovid. Trist. lib. iv. Eleg. 10.

LONDON:
Printed for T. LOWNDES; T. CASLON; W. NICOLL;
S. BLADON, and C. CORBETT.

M. DCC. LXXVII.

*** The Reader is desired to observe, that the passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 17, &c. Page 18.

PROLOGUE.

POETS will think nothing so checks their Fury
As Wits, Cits, Beaux, and Women for their Jury.
Our Spark's half dead to think what Medley's come,
With blended Judgments to pronounce his Doom.
'Tis all false Fear; for in a mingled Pit,
Why, what your grave Don thinks but dully writ,
His Neighbour i'th' great Wig may take for Wit.
Some authors court the few, the wise if any;
Our youth's content, if he can reach the many,
Who go with much like ends to church and play,
Not to observe what priests or poets say,
No! no! your thoughts, like theirs, lie quite another way.
The ladies safe may smile, for here's no slander,
No smut, no lew'd-tong'd beau, nor double entendre.
'Tis true, he has a spark just come from France,
But then so far from Beau—why, he talks sense!
Like coin oft carry'd out, but—seldom brought from thence.
There's yet a gang to whom our spark submits,
Your elbow shaking fool, that lives by's wits,
That's only witty tho', just as he lives, by fits.
Who, Lion-like, through bailiffs, scours away,
Hunts, in the face, a dinner all the day,
At night with empty bowels grumbles o'er the play.
And now the modish 'Prentice he implores,
Who, with his master's cash, stol'n out of doors,
Employs it on a brace of——honourable whores:
While their good bulky mother pleas'd, sits by,
Bawd regent of the bubble gallery.
Next to our mounted friends, we humbly move,
Who all your side-box tricks are much above,
And never fail to pay us with your love.
Ah friends! poor Dorset *garden house is gone;*
Our merry meetings there are all undone:
Quite lost to us, sure for some strange misdeeds,
That strong dog Sampson's *pull'd it o'er our heads,*
Snaps rope like thread; but when his fortune's told him,
He'll hear perhaps of rope will one day hold him:
At least, I hope, that our good-natur'd town
Will find a way to pull his prices down.
Well, that's all! now, gentlemen, for the play,
On second thoughts, I've but two words to say;
Such as it is for your delight design'd,
Hear it, read, try, judge, and speak as you find.

Dramatis Perſonæ, 1777.

MEN.	At Drury-Lane.
Sir Harry Wildair	Mr. Dodd.
Beau Clincher	Mr. King.
Colonel Standard	Mr. Bensley.
Alderman Smuggler	Mr. Parsons.
Clincher junior	Mr. Weston.
Vizard	Mr. Packer.
Dicky	Mr. Waldron.
Tom Errand	Mr. Griffith.
WOMEN.	
Angelica	Miss Hopkins.
Lady Darling	Mrs. Cross.
Parly	Mrs. Love.
Lady Lurewell	Mrs. Baddeley.

Conſtable, Mob, Porter's Wife, Servants, *&c.*

SCENE, *LONDON.*

THE

CONSTANT COUPLE.

ACT I.

SCENE, *The Park.*

Enter Vizard *with a Letter, a Servant following.*

Viz. *ANGELICA* ſend it back unopen'd! ſay you?

Serv. As you ſee, ſir.

Viz. The pride of theſe virtuous women is more inſufferable than the immodeſty of proſtitutes—after all my encouragement to ſlight me thus!

Serv. She ſaid, ſir, that imagining your morals ſincere, ſhe gave you acceſs to her converſation; but that your late behaviour in her company has convinc'd her, that your love and religion are both hypocriſy, and that ſhe believes your letter like yourſelf, fair on the outſide, foul within; ſo ſent it back unopen'd.

'*Viz.* May obſtinacy guard her beauty till wrinkles 'bury it; then may deſire prevail to make her curſe 'that untimely pride her diſappointed age repents'—I'll be reveng'd the very firſt opportunity——ſaw you the old lady *Darling*, her mother?

Serv. Yes, ſir, and ſhe was pleas'd to ſay much in your commendation.

Viz. That's my cue——an eſteem grafted in old age is hardly rooted out; years ſtiffen their opinions with their bodies, and old zeal is only to be cozen'd by young hypocriſy.——— [*Aſide.*

Run to the lady *Lurewell*'s, and know of her maid, whe-

ther her ladyſhip will be at home this evening. Her beauty is ſufficient cure for *Angelica*'s ſcorn.

[*Exit Servant.* Vizard *pulls out a Book, reads, and walks about.*

Enter Smuggler.

Smug. Ay, there's a pattern for the young men o'th' times—at his meditation ſo early, ſome book of pious ejaculations, I'm ſure.

Viz. This *Hobbes* is an excellent fellow? [*Aſide.*] O Uncle *Smuggler!* to find you at this end o'th' town is a miracle.

Smug. I have ſeen a miracle this morning indeed, couſin *Vizard.*

Viz. What is it, pray, ſir?

Smug. A man at his devotion ſo near the court—I'm very glad, boy, that you keep your ſanctity untainted in this infectious place; the very air of this Park is heatheniſh, and every man's breath I meet ſcents of atheiſm.

Viz. Surely, ſir, ſome great concern muſt bring you to this unſanctify'd end of the town.

Smug. A very unſanctify'd concern truly, couſin.

Viz. What is it?

Smug. A law-ſuit, boy——ſhall I tell you?——My ſhip the *Swan* is newly arriv'd from *St. Sebaſtian*, laden with *Portugal* wines: now the impudent rogue of a tide-waiter has the face to affirm it is *French* wines in *Spaniſh* caſks, and has indicted me upon the ſtatute—— O conſcience! conſcience! theſe tide-waiters and ſurveyors plague us more with their *French* wines, than the war did with *French* privateers——Ay, there's another plague of the nation——

Enter Colonel Standard.

A red coat and feather.

Viz. Col. *Standard*, I'm your humble ſervant.

Stand. May be not, Sir.

Viz. Why ſo?

Stand. Becauſe——I'm diſbanded.

Viz. How! Broke?

Stand. This very Morning, in *Hide-Park*, my brave regiment, a thouſand men that look'd like lions yeſterday,

terday, were ſcatter'd, and look'd as poor and ſimple as the herd of deer that graz'd beſide 'em.

Smug. Tal, al, deral [*Singing.*] I'll have a bonfire this night as high as the monument.

Stand. A bonfire! thou dry, wither'd, ill-nature; had not thoſe brave fellows ſwords defended you, your houſe had been a bonfire e'er this about your ears.——Did we not venture our lives, ſir?

Smug. And did we not pay for your lives, ſir?——Venture your lives! I'm ſure we ventur'd our money, and that's life and ſoul to me.——Sir, we'll maintain you no longer.

Stand. Then your wives ſhall, old *Actæon.* There are five and thirty ſtrapping officers gone this morning to live upon free quarter in the city.

Smug. O Lord! O Lord! I ſhall have a ſon within theſe nine months born with a leading ſtaff in his hand.——Sir, you are.———

Stand. What, ſir?

Smug. Sir, I ſay that you are.———

Stand. What, ſir?

Smug. Diſbanded, ſir, that's all———I ſee my lawyer yonder. [*Exit.*

Viz. Sir, I am very ſorry for your misfortune.

Stand. Why ſo? I don't come to borrow money of you; if you're my Friend, meet me this evening at the *Rummer*; I'll pay my ſoy, drink a health to my king, proſperity to my country, and away for *Hungary* tomorrow morning.

Viz. What! you won't leave us?

Stand. What! A ſoldier ſtay here, to look like an old pair of colours in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, ragged and ruſty! no, no———I met yeſterday a broken lieutenant, he was aſham'd to own that he wanted a dinner, but begg'd eighteen-pence of me to buy a new ſcabbard for his ſword.

Viz. Oh, but you have good friends, colonel!

Stand. Oh, very good friends! my father's a Lord, and my elder brother a beau; mighty-good friends indeed!

Viz. But your country may perhaps want your ſword again.

Stand. Nay, for that matter, let but a ſingle drum beat up for volunteers between *Ludgate* and *Charing-Croſs*, and I ſhall undoubtedly hear it at the walls of *Buda*.

Viz. Come, come, colonel, there are ways of making your fortune at home ——— make your addreſſes to the fair, you're a man of honour and courage.

Stand. Ay, my courage is like to do me wondrous ſervice with the fair: this pretty croſs cut over my eye will attract a ducheſs —— I warrant 'twill be a mighty grace to my ogling —— had I us'd the ſtratagem of a certain brother colonel of mine, I might ſucceed.

Viz. What was it, pray?

Stand. Why, to ſave his pretty face for the women, he always turn'd his back upon the enemy. ——— he was a man of honour for the ladies.

Viz. Come, come, the loves of *Mars* and *Venus* will never fail; you muſt get a miſtreſs.

Stand. Prithee, no more on't —— you have awaken'd a thought, from which, and the kingdom, I wou'd have ſtol'n away at once. ——— To be plain, I have a miſtreſs.

Viz. And ſhe's cruel?

Stand. No.

Viz. Her parents prevent your happineſs?

Stand. Nor that.

Viz. Then ſhe has no fortune?

Stand. A large one: beauty to tempt all mankind, and virtue to beat off their aſſaults. O *Vizard!* ſuch a creature!

Enter Sir Harry Wildair, *croſſes the Stage ſinging, with Footmen after him.*

Hey-day! who the devil have we here?

Viz. The joy of the play-houſe, and life of the Park; Sir *Harry Wildair*, newly come from *Paris*.

Stand. Sir *Harry Wildair!* did not he make a campaign in *Flanders* ſome three or four years ago?

Viz. The ſame.

Stand. Why, he behaved himſelf very bravely.

Viz. Why not? Do'ſt think bravery and gaiety are inconſiſtent? He's a gentleman of moſt happy circumſtances,

ſtances, born to a plentiful eſtate; has had a genteel and eaſy education, free from the rigidneſs of teachers, and pedantry of ſchools. His florid conſtitution being never ruffled by misfortune, nor ſtinted in its pleaſures, has render'd him entertaining to others, and eaſy to himſelf.—Turning all paſſion into gaiety of humour, by which he chuſes rather to rejoice with his friends, than be hated by any; as you ſhall ſee.

Re-enter Wildair.

Wild. Ha, *Vizard!*

Viz. Sir *Harry!*

Wild. Who thought to find you out of the *Rubrick* ſo long? I thought thy hypocriſy had been wedded to a pulpit-cuſhion long ago.——Sir, if I miſtake not your face, your name is *Standard.*

Stand. Sir *Harry*, I'm your humble ſervant.

Wild. Come, gentlemen, the news, the news o'th' town, for I'm juſt arriv'd.

Viz. Why, in the city-end o'th' town we're playing the knave, to get eſtates.

Stand. And in the court-end playing the fool, in ſpending 'em.

Wild. Juſt ſo in *Paris.* I'm glad we're grown ſo modiſh.

Viz. We are ſo reform'd, that gallantry is taken for vice.

Stand. And hypocriſy for religion.

Wild. A la mode de Paris again.

'*Viz.* Not one whore between *Ludgate* and *Aldgate.*

'*Stand.* But ten times more cuckolds than ever.'—

Viz. Nothing like an oath in the city.

Stand. That's a miſtake; for my major ſwore a hundred and fifty laſt night to a merchant's wife in her bed-chamber.

Wild. Pſhaw, this is trifling; tell me news, gentlemen. What lord has lately broke his fortune at the *Groom-Porter's*? Or his heart at *New-Market*, for the loſs of a race? What wife has been lately ſueing in *Doctors-Commons* for alimony? Or, what daughter run away with her father's *valet?* what beau gave the nobleſt ball at the *Bath*, or had the fineſt coach in the ring? I want news, gentlemen.

Stand. Faith, ſir, theſe are no news at all.

Viz. But pray, Sir *Harry*, tell us ſome news of your travels.

Wild. With all my heart.—You muſt know then, I went over to *Amſterdam* in a *Dutch* ſhip: I there had a *Dutch* whore for five ſtivers. I went from thence to *Landen*, where I was heartily drub'd in the battle with the but-end of a *Swiſs* muſket. I thence went to *Paris*, where I had half a dozen intrigues, bought half a dozen new ſuits, fought a couple of duels, and here I am again *in ſtatu quo*.

Viz. But we heard that you deſign'd to make the tour of *Italy*; what brought you back ſo ſoon?

Wild. That which brought you into the world, and may perhaps carry you out of it; a woman.

Stand. What! quit the pleaſures of travel for a woman!

Wild. Ay, colonel, for ſuch a woman! I had rather ſee her *Ruelle* than the palace of *Lewis le Grand:* there's more glory in her ſmile, than in the *Jubilee* at *Rome*; and I wou'd rather kiſs her hand, than the Pope's toe.

Viz. You, colonel, have been very laviſh in the beauty and virtue of your miſtreſs; and Sir *Harry* here has been no leſs eloquent in the praiſe of his. Now will I lay you both ten guineas a-piece, that neither of them is ſo pretty, ſo witty, or ſo virtuous, as mine.

Stand. 'Tis done.

Wild. I'll double the ſtakes—But, gentlemen, now I think on't, how ſhall we be reſolv'd? For I know not where my miſtreſs may be found; ſhe left *Paris* about a month before me, and I had an account——

Stand. How, ſir! left *Paris* about a month before you?

Wild. Yes, ſir, and I had an account that ſhe lodg'd ſomewhere in St. *James*'s.

Viz. How! ſomewhere in St. *James*'s, ſay you?

Wild. Ay, ſir, but I know not where, and perhaps mayn't find her this fortnight.

Stand. Her name, pray, Sir *Harry*.

Viz. Ay, ay, her name; perhaps we know her.

Wild. Her name! ay,———ſhe has the ſofteſt, whiteſt hand that e'er was made of fleſh and blood; her lips ſo balmy ſweet———

Stand.

Stand. But her name, sir.

Wild. Then her neck and breast;——her breasts do so heave, so heave. [*Singing.*

'*Viz.* But her name, Sir; her quality.

'*Wild.* Then her shape, colonel!'

Stand. But her name I want, sir.

Wild. Then her eyes, *Vizard!*

Stand. Pshaw, Sir *Harry*, her name, or nothing.

Wild. Then if you must have it, she's call'd the lady ——But then her foot, gentlemen; she dances to a miracle. *Vizard*, you have certainly lost your wager.

Viz. Why, you have certainly lost your senses; we shall never discover the picture, unless you subscribe the name.

Wild. Then her name is *Lurewell.*

Stand 'Sdeath, my mistress. [*Aside.*

Viz. My mistress, by *Jupiter.* [*Aside.*

Wild. Do you know her, gentlemen?

Stand. I have seen her, sir.

Wild. Can'st tell where she lodges? Tell me, dear colonel.

Stand. Your humble servant, sir. [*Exit* Stand.

Wild. Nay, hold, colonel; I'll follow you, and will know. [*Runs out.*

Viz. The lady *Lurewell*, his mistress! he loves her: but she loves me.—But he's a baronet, and I plain *Vizard*; he has a coach and six, and I walk on foot; I was bred in *London*, and he in *Paris.*——That very circumstance has murder'd me——then some stratagem must be laid to divert his pretensions.

Re-enter Wildair.

Wild. Prithee, *Dick*, what makes the colonel so out of humour?

Viz. Because he's out of pay, I suppose.

Wild. 'Slife, that's true; I was beginning to mistrust some rivalship in the case.

Viz. And suppose there were, you know the colonel can fight, Sir *Harry.*

Wild. Fight! pshaw! but he can't dance, ha! he contend for a woman, *Vizard!* 'slife, man, if ladies were to be gain'd by sword and pistol only, what the devil should all we beaux do?

Viz. I'll try him farther. [*Aside.*] But wou'd not you, Sir *Harry*, fight for this woman you so much admire?

Wild. Fight! let me consider. I love her——that's true;—but then I love honest Sir *Harry Wildair* better. The lady *Lurewell* is divinely charming——right—— but then a thrust i'th' guts, or a *Middlesex* jury, is as ugly as the devil.

Viz. Ay, Sir *Harry*, 'twere a dangerous cast for a beau baronet to be tried by a parcel of greasy, grumbling, bartering boobies, who wou'd hang you, purely because you're a gentleman.

Wild. Ay, but, on t'other hand, I have money enough to bribe the rogues with: so upon mature deliberation, I would fight for her.——But no more of her. Prithee, *Vizard*, can't you recommend a friend to a pretty mistress by the by, till I can find my own? You have store I'm sure; you cunning poaching dogs make surer game, than we that hunt open and fair. Prithee now, good *Vizard*.

Viz. Let me consider a little.——Now Love and revenge inspire my politics. [*Aside.*

[*Pauses whilst Sir* Harry *walks singing.*

Wild. Pshaw! thou'rt as long studying for a new mistress, as a drawer is piercing a new pipe.

Viz. I design a new pipe for you, and wholesome wine; you'll therefore bear a little expectation.

Wild. Ha! say'st thou, dear *Vizard?*

Viz. A girl of Sixteen, Sir *Harry*.

Wild. Now sixteen thousand blessings light on thee.

Viz. Pretty and witty.

Wild. Ay, ay, but her name, *Vizard*.

Viz. Her name! yes,——she has the softest whitest Hand that e'er was made of flesh and blood; her lips so balmy sweet——

Wild. Well, well, but where shall I find her, man?

Viz. Find her!——but then her foot, Sir *Harry*; she dances to a miracle.

Wild. Prithee don't distract me.

Viz. Well then, you must know, that this lady is the greatest beauty in town; her name's *Angelica:* she that passes for her mother is a private bawd, and call'd the

the Lady *Darling*; she goes for a Baronet's Lady, (no disparagement to your honour, Sir *Harry*) I assure you.

Wild. Pshaw, hang my honour; but what street, what house?

Viz. Not so fast, Sir *Harry*; you must have my passport for your admittance, and you'll find my recommendation in a line or two will procure you very civil entertainment; I suppose 20 or 30 pieces handsomely plac'd, will gain the point: I'll ensure her sound.

Wild. Thou dearest friend to a man in necessity.—— Here, sirrah, order my coach about to St. *James's*; I'll walk across the Park. [*To his Servant.*

Enter Clincher *Senior.*

Clinch. Here, sirrah, order my coach about to St. *James's*, I'll walk across the Park too———

Mr. *Vizard*, your most devoted———

Sir [to *Wildair*] I admire the mode of your shoulder-knot;

Methinks it hangs very emphatically and carries an air of travel in it:

Your sword-knot too is most ornamentally modish, and bears a foreign mien.

Gentlemen, my brother is just arrived in town;

So that being upon the wing to kiss his hands,

I hope you'll pardon this abrupt departure of,

Gentlemen, your most devoted, and most faithful humble servant. [*Exit.*

Wild. Prithee dost know him?

Viz. Know him! why it is *Clincher*, who was apprentice to my uncle *Smuggler*, the merchant in the city.

Wild. What makes him so gay?

Viz. Why he's in mourning.

Wild. In mourning!

Viz. Yes, for his father. The kind old man in *Hertfordshire* t'other day broke his neck a fox-hunting;

The son upon the news has broke his indentures;

Whip'd from behind the counter into the side-box,

'Forswears merchandize, where he must live by cheating,

'And usurps gentility, where he must die by raking,

'He keeps his coach and liveries, brace of geldings,

'Leash of mistresses,'

And now talks of nothing but wines,

Intrigues, plays, fashions, and *going to the Jubilee.*

Wild.

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! how many pounds of pulvil muſt the fellow uſe in ſweetning himſelf from the ſmell of hops and tobacco?

Faugh—I'my conſcience methought,
Like *Olivia*'s lover, he ſtunk of *Thames-Street.*
But now for *Angelica,* that's her name:
We'll to the Prince's chocolate-houſe,
Where you ſhall write my paſs-port. *Allons.* [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Lady* Lurewell's *Lodgings.*

Lurewell *and her Maid* Parly.

Lure. Parly, my pocket-book—let me ſee—*Madrid, Venice, Paris, London!*—Ay, *London!* they may talk what they will of the hot countries, but I find love moſt fruitful under this climate—in a month's ſpace have I gain'd—let me ſee, *Imprimis,* Colonel *Standard.*

Par. And how will your ladyſhip manage him?

Lure. As all ſoldiers ſhould be manag'd; he ſhall ſerve me till I gain my ends, then I'll diſband him.

Par. But he loves you, madam.

Lure. Therefore I ſcorn him;
I hate all that don't love me, and ſlight all that do:
Would his whole deluding ſex admir'd me,
Thus wou'd I ſlight them all.
My virgin and unwary innocence
Was wrong'd by faithleſs man;
But now glance eyes, plot brain, diſſemble face,
Lie tongue, and be a ſecond *Eve* to tempt, ſeduce, and
Damn the treacherous kind.———
Let me ſurvey my captives.———
The *colonel* leads the van; next Mr. *Vizard,*
He courts me out of the Practice of Piety,
Therefore is a hypocrite;
Then *Clincher,* he adores me with orangerée,
And is conſequently a fool;
Then my old merchant, Alderman *Smuggler,*
He's a compound of both;—out of which medley of lovers, if I don't make good diverſion——what d'ye think, *Parly?*

Par. I think, madam, I'm like to be very virtuous in your ſervice, if you teach me all thoſe tricks that you uſe to your lovers.

Lure.

Lure. You're a fool, child! obſerve this, that tho' a woman ſwear, forſwear, lie, diſſemble, back-bite, be proud, vain, malicious, any thing, if ſhe ſecures the main chance, ſhe's ſtill virtuous; that's a maxim.

Par. I can't be perſuaded tho', madam, but that you really lov'd Sir *Harry Wildair* in *Paris*.

Lure. Of all the lovers I ever had, he was my greateſt plague, for I cou'd never make him uneaſy: I left him involv'd in a duel upon my account: I long to know whether the fop be kill'd or not.

Enter Standard.

O Lord! no ſooner talk of killing, but the ſoldier is conjur'd up. You're upon hard duty, colonel, to ſerve your king, your country, and a miſtreſs too.

Stand. The latter, I muſt confeſs, is the hardeſt; for in war, madam, we can be reliev'd in our duty; but in love, who wou'd take our poſt, is our enemy; emulation in glory is tranſporting, but rivals here intolerable.

Lure. Thoſe that bear away the prize in the field, ſhould boaſt the ſame ſucceſs in the bed-chamber; and I think, conſidering the weakneſs of our ſex, we ſhou'd make thoſe our companions who can be our champions.

Stand. I once, madam, hop'd the honour of defending you from all injuries, thro' a title to your lovely perſon, but now my love muſt attend my fortune. My commiſſion, madam, was my paſs-port to the fair; adding a nobleneſs to my paſſion, it ſtampt a value in my love; 'twas once the life of honour, but now its winding-ſheet, and with it muſt my love be buried.

Par. What! diſbanded, colonel?

Stand. Yes, Mrs. *Parly*.

Par. Faugh, the nauſeous fellow! he ſtinks of poverty already. [*Aſide.*

Lure. His misfortune troubles me, 'cauſe it may prevent my deſigns. [*Aſide.*

Stand. I'll chuſe, madam, rather to deſtroy my paſſion by abſence abroad, than have it ſtarv'd at home.

Lure. I'm ſorry, ſir, you have ſo mean an opinion of my affection, as to imagine it founded upon your fortune. And to convince you of your miſtake, here I vow

vow by all that's sacred, I own the same affection now as before. Let it suffice, my fortune is considerable.

Stand. No, madam no; I'll never be a charge to her I love! the man that sells himself for gold, is the worst of prostitutes.

Lure. Now were he any other creature but a man, I cou'd love him. [*Aside.*

Stand. This only last request I make, that no title recommend a fool, no office introduce a knave, nor coat a coward, to my place in your affections; so farewell my country, and adieu my love. [*Exit.*

Lure. Now the devil take thee for being so honourable: here, *Parly*, call him back, I shall lose half my diversion else. Now for a trial of skill. [*Re-enter* Colonel. Sir, I hope you'll pardon my curiosity:
When do you take your journey?

Stand. To-morrow morning, early, madam.

Lure. So suddenly! which way are you design'd to travel?

Stand. That I can't yet resolve on.

Lure. Pray, sir, tell me; pray, sir; I intreat you; why are you so obstinate!

Stand. Why are you so curious, madam?

Lure. Because———

Stand. What!

Lure. Because, I, I,———

Stand. Because! what, madam?—Pray tell me.

Lure. Because I design to follow you. [*Crying.*

Stand. Follow me! by all that's great, I ne'er was proud before.
'But such love from such a creature
'Might swell the vanity of the proudest prince.'
Follow me! by Heavens thou shalt not.
What! expose thee to the hazards of a camp——
Rather I'll stay, and here
Bear the contempt of fools, 'and worst of fortune.'

Lure. You need not, shall not; my estate for both is sufficient.

Stand. Thy estate! no, I'll turn a knave, and purchase one myself; I'll cringe to the proud man I undermine, and fawn on him that I wou'd bite to death; I'll tip my tongue with flattery, and smooth my face with smiles;

ſmiles; I'll turn pimp, informer, office-broker, nay coward, to be great; and ſacrifice it all to thee, my generous fair.

Lure. And I'll diſſemble, lie, ſwear, jilt, any thing, but I'll reward thy love, and recompenſe thy noble paſſion.

Stand. Sir *Harry*, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir *Harry*, ha, ha, ha! rather kiſs her hand, than the Pope's toe, ha, ha, ha!

Lure. What Sir *Harry*, Colonel! What Sir *Harry!*

Stand. Sir *Harry Wildair*, madam.

Lure. What! is he come over?

Stand. Ay, and he told me—but I don't believe a ſyllable on't.

Lure. What did he tell you?

Stand. Only called you his miſtreſs, and pretending to be extravagant in your commendation, would vainly inſinuate the praiſe of his own judgment and good fortune in a choice.———

Lure. How eaſily is the vanity of fops tickled by our ſex!

Stand. Why, your ſex is the vanity of fops.

Lure. On my conſcience, I believe ſo. This gentleman, becauſe he danc'd well, I pitch'd on for a partner at a ball in *Paris*, and ever ſince he has ſo perſecuted me with letters, ſongs, dances, ſerenading, flattery, foppery, and noiſe, that I was forc'd to fly the kingdom——and I warrant you he made you jealous.

Stand. Faith, madam, I was a little uneaſy.

Lure. You ſhall have a plentiful revenge; I'll ſend him back all his fooliſh letters, ſongs and verſes, and you yourſelf ſhall carry 'em; 'twill afford you opportunity of triumphing, and free me from his farther impertinence; for of all men he's my averſion. I'll run and fetch them inſtantly.

Stand. Dear madam, a rare project! How ſhall I bait him like *Actæon* with his own dogs!——Well, Mrs. *Parly*, it is ordered by *act of parliament*, that you receive no more pieces, Mrs. *Parly*.———

Par. 'Tis provided by the ſame act, that you ſend no more meſſages by me, good Colonel; you muſt not pretend to ſend any more letters, unleſs you can pay the poſtage. *Stand.*

Stand. Come, come, don't be mercenary; take example by your lady, be honourable.

Par. A-lack-a-day, sir, it shews as ridiculous and haughty for us to imitate our betters in their honour, as in their finery; leave honour to nobility that can support it: We poor folks, colonel, have no pretence to't; and truly, I think, sir, that your honour should be cashier'd with your leading-staff.

Stand. 'Tis one of the greatest curses of poverty, to be the jest of chambermaids!

Enter Lurewell.

Lure. Here's the packet, colonel; the whole magazine of love's artillery. [*Gives him the packet.*

Stand. Which since I have gain'd, I will turn upon the enemy. Madam, I'll bring you the news of my victory this evening. Poor Sir *Harry*, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

'*Lure.* To the right about as you were; march colo-
'nel! ha, ha, ha!
'*Vain man, who boasts of study'd parts and wiles!*
'*Nature in us, your deepest art beguiles,*
'*Stamping deep cunning in our frowns and smiles.*
'*You toil for art, your intellects you trace;*
'*Woman, without a thought, bears policy in her face.*'

ACT II. SCENE, Clincher *Junior*'s *Lodgings.*

Enter Clincher *opening a Letter, Servant following.*

Clin.—reads. Dear Brother,

I Will see you presently; I have sent this lad to wait on you, he can instruct you in the fashions of the town; I am your affectionate brother,

Clincher.

Very well, and what's your name, sir?

Dick. My name is *Dicky*, sir?

Clin. Dicky!

Dick. Ay, *Dicky*, sir.

Clin. Very well, a pretty name! And what can you do, Mr. *Dicky?*

Dick.

Dick. Why, sir, I can powder a wig, and pick up a whore.

Clin. O Lord! O Lord! A whore! Why are there many whores in this town?

Dick. Ha, ha, ha! many whores? There's a question indeed; why, sir, there are above five hundred surgeons in town.—Hark'e, sir, do you see that woman there in the velvet scarf, and red knots?

Clin. Ay, sir, what then?

Dick. Why she shall be at your service in three minutes, as I'm a pimp.

Clin. O *Jupiter Ammon!* Why she's a gentlewoman.

Dick. A gentlewoman! so are all the whores in town, sir.

Enter Clincher *senior.*

Clin. sen. Brother, you're welcome to *London!*

Clin. jun. I thought, brother, you ow'd so much to the memory of my father, as to wear mourning for his death.

Clin. sen. Why so I do, fool; I wear this because I have the estate, and you wear that, because you have not the estate. You have cause to mourn indeed, brother. Well, brother, I'm glad to see you, fare you well. [*Going.*

Clin. jun. Stay, stay, brother; where are you going?

Clin. sen. How natural 'tis for a country booby to ask impertinent questions. Hark'e, sir, is not my father dead?

Clin. jun. Ay, ay, to my sorrow.

Clin. sen. No matter for that, he's dead; and am not I a young powder'd extravagant *English* heir?

Clin. jun. Very right, sir.

Clin. sen. Why then, sir, you may be sure that I am going to the *Jubilee*, sir.

Clin. jun. *Jubilee!* What's that?

Clin. sen. *Jubilee!* Why the *Jubilee* is——faith, I don't know what it is.

Dick. Why, the *Jubilee* is the same thing with our *Lord Mayor*'s day in the city; there will be *pageants*, and *squibs*, and *raree shows*, and all that, sir.

Clin. jun. And must you go so soon, brother?

Clin.

Clin. sen. Yes, sir, for I must stay a month in *Amsterdam*, to study poetry.

Clin. jun. Then I suppose, brother, you travel through *Muscovy* to learn fashions, don't you, brother?

Clin. sen. Brother! Prithee, *Robin*, don't call me brother; sir will do every jot as well.

Clin. jun. O *Jupiter Ammon!* why so?

Clin. sen. Because people will imagine that you have a spite at me.—— But have you seen your cousin *Angelica* yet, and her mother the Lady *Darling?*

Clin. jun. No, my dancing-master has not been with me yet. How shall I salute them, brother?

Clin. sen. Pshaw, that's easy; 'tis only two scrapes, a kiss, and your humble servant. I'll tell you more when I come from the *Jubilee*. Come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Lady* Darling's *House*.

Enter Wildair *with a Letter.*

Wild. *Like light and heat incorporate we lay,*
We bless'd the night and curs'd the coming day.

Well, if this paper-kite flies sure, I'm secure of my game—humph! The prettiest *beedel* I have seen, a very stately genteel one. [*Footmen cross the stage.* Hey day! equipage too! Now for a bawd by the *curtesy*, and a whore with a *coat of arms*.—'Sdeath. I'm afraid I've mistaken the house.

Enter Lady Darling.

No, this must be the bawd by her gravity.

Darl. Your business, pray, sir?

Wild. Pleasure, madam.

Darl. Then, sir, you have no business here.

Wild. This letter, madam, will inform you farther; Mr. *Vizard* sent it, with his humble service to your ladyship.

Darl. How does my cousin, sir?

Wild. Ay, her cousin too; that's right procures again.

Madam,

CONSTANT COUPLE.

d del. *Goldar sculp.*

Mrs BARRY as SIR HARRY WILDAIR.

'Sdeath I'm afraid I've mistaken the House

Act II, Sc. 2.

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Madam,

Darl. reads. *Earneſt inclination to ſerve——Sir* Harry——*Madam——Court my Couſin——Gentleman Fortune——*

Your Ladyſhip's moſt humble Servant,

VIZARD.

Sir, your fortune and quality are ſufficient to recommend you any where; but what goes farther with me, is the recommendation of ſo ſober and pious a young gentleman as my couſin *Vizard*.

Wild. A right ſanctify'd bawd o'my word.

Darl. Sir *Harry*, your converſation with Mr. *Vizard* argues you a gentleman, free from the looſe and vicious carriage of the town; I'll therefore call my daughter. [*Exit.*

Wild. Now go thy way for an illuſtrious bawd of *Babylon*——She dreſſes up a ſin ſo religiouſly, that the devil wou'd hardly know it of his making.

Re-enter Darling *with* Angelica.

'*Darl.* Pray, daughter, uſe him civilly; ſuch matches, 'won't offer every day. [*Exit. Lady* Darl.'

Wild. O all ye powers of love! An angel! 'Sdeath, what money have I got in my pocket! I can't offer her leſs than twenty guineas——and by *Jupiter* ſhe's worth a hundred.

Angel. 'Tis he! The very ſame! And his perſon as agreeable as his character of good humour——pray heav'n his ſilence proceed from reſpect.

Wild. How innocent ſhe looks! How would that modeſty adorn virtue, when it makes even vice look ſo charming!——By heaven there's ſuch a commanding innocence in her looks, that I dare not aſk the queſtion.

Angel. Now all the charms of real love and feign'd indifference aſſiſt me to engage his heart, for mine is loſt already.

Wild. Madam—I, I——zoons, I cannot ſpeak to her—but ſhe's a whore, and I will——madam, in ſhort, I, I——O hypocriſy, hypocriſy, what a charming ſin art thou?

Angel. He is caught; now to ſecure my conqueſt—I thought, Sir, you had buſineſs to communicate.

Wild.

Wild. Buſineſs to communicate! How nicely ſhe words it! Yes, madam, I have a little buſineſs to communicate. Don't you love ſinging birds, madam?

Angel. That's an odd queſtion for a lover——Yes, ſir.

Wild. Why then, madam, here is a neſt of the prettieſt goldfinches that ever chirp'd in a cage; twenty young ones, I aſſure you, madam.

Angel. Twenty young ones! What then, ſir?

Wild. Why then, madam, there are—twenty young ones——'Slife, I think twenty is pretty fair.

Angel. He's mad, ſure——Sir *Harry*, when you have learn'd more wit and manners, you ſhall be welcome here again.

Wild. Wit and manners! Egad, now I conceive there is a great deal of wit and manners in twenty guineas—I'm ſure 'tis all the wit and manners I have about me at preſent. What ſhall I do?

Enter Clincher *junior and* Dicky.

What the the devil's here? Another couſin, I warrant ye! Hark'e, ſir, can you lend me ten or a dozen guineas inſtantly? I'll pay you fifteen for them in three hours, upon my honour.

Clin. jun. Theſe *London* ſparks are plaguy impudent! This fellow, by his wig and aſſurance, can be no leſs than a courtier.

Dick. He's rather a courtier by his borrowing.

Clin. jun. Faith, ſir, I ha'n't above five guineas about me.

Wild. What buſineſs have you here then, ſir? For to my knowledge twenty won't be ſufficient.

Clinch. jun. Sufficient! For what, ſir?

Wild. What, ſir! Why, for that, ſir; what the devil ſhould it be, ſir? I know your buſineſs, notwithſtanding all your gravity, ſir.

Clinch. jun. My buſineſs! Why my couſin lives here.

Wild. I know your couſin does live here, and *Vizard*'s couſin, and every body's couſin——Hark'e, ſir, I ſhall return immediately; and if you offer to touch her till I come back, I ſhall cut your throat, raſcal. [*Exit.*

Clinch. jun. Why the man's mad, ſure!

Dick. Mad, ſir, ay; why he's a beau.

Clinch.

Clinch. jun. A beau! What's that? Are all madmen beaux?

Dick. No, sir; but most beaux are madmen. But now for your cousin: Remember your three scrapes, a kiss, and your humble servant. [Exeunt, *as into the house.*

SCENE, *the Street.*

Enter Wildair, *Colonel following.*

Stand. Sir *Harry*, Sir *Harry!*

Wild. I'm in haste, colonel; besides, if you're in no better humour than when I parted with you in the park this morning, your company won't be very agreeable.

Stand. You're a happy man, Sir *Harry*, who are never out of humour: can nothing move your gall, Sir *Harry?*

Wild. Nothing but impossibilities, which are the same as nothing.

Stand. What impossibilities?

Wild. The resurrection of my father to disinherit me, or an act of parliament against wenching. A man of eight thousand pounds *per annum* to be vext! No, no; anger and spleen are companions for younger brothers.

Stand. Suppose one call'd you son of a whore behind your back.

Wild. Why, then wou'd I call him rascal behind his back; so we're even.

Stand. But suppose you had lost a mistress.

Wild. Why, then I wou'd get another.

Stand. But suppose you were discarded by the woman you love, that wou'd surely trouble you.

Wild. You're mistaken, colonel; my love is neither romantically honourable, nor meanly mercenary; 'tis only a pitch of gratitude; while she loves me, I love her; when she desists, the obligation's void.

Stand. But to be mistaken in your opinion, sir; if the Lady *Lurewell* (only suppose it) had discarded you—I say, only suppose it——and had sent your discharge by me.

Wild. Pshaw! that's another impossibility.

Stand. Are you sure of that?

Wild. Why, 'twere a soleciſm in nature. Why she's a rib of me, sir. She dances with me, sings with me, plays with me, swears with me, lies with me.

Stand.

Stand. How, sir?

Wild. I mean in an honourable way; that is, she lies for me. In short, we are as like one another as a couple of guineas.

Stand. Now that I have rais'd you to the highest pinnacle of vanity, will I give you so mortifying a fall, as shall dash your hopes to pieces——I pray your honour to peruse these papers. [*Gives him the packet.*

Wild. What is't, the muster-roll of your regiment, Colonel?

Stand. No, no, 'tis a list of your forces in your last love campaign; and, for your comfort, all disbanded.

Wild. Prithee, good metaphorical colonel, what d'ye mean?

Stand. Read, sir, read; these are the *Sibyls* leaves that will unfold your destiny.

Wild. So it be not a false deed to cheat me of my estate, what care I——[*opening the packet*] humph! my hand! To the Lady *Lurewell*—To the Lady *Lurewell*—To the Lady *Lurewell*——What the devil hast thou been tampering with, to conjure up these spirits?

Stand. A certain familiar of your acquaintance, sir. Read, read.

Wild. [*Reading*]—Madam, my passion—so natural—your beauty contending—force of charms—mankind—eternal admirer *Wildair!* I ne'er was asham'd of my name before.

Stand. What, Sir *Harry Wildair* out of humour! ha, ha, ha! Poor Sir *Harry*; more glory in her smile than in the *Jubilee* at *Rome*, ha, ha, ha! But then her foot, Sir *Harry*, she dances to a miracle! ha, ha, ha! Fie, Sir *Harry*, a man of your parts write letters not worth keeping! What say'st thou, my dear knight errant? ha, ha, ha! you may seek adventures now indeed.

Wild. [*sings*] No, no, let her wander, *&c.*

Stand. You are jilted to some tune, sir; blown up with false music, that's all.

Wild. Now, why should I be angry that a woman is a woman? Since inconstancy and falshood are grounded in their natures, how can they help it?

Stand. Then they must be grounded in your nature; for she's a rib of you, Sir *Harry*.

Wild.

Wild. Here's a copy of verſes too; I muſt turn poet in the devil's name—ſtay—'ſdeath, what's here? This is her hand—Oh the charming characters! *My dear* Wildair. [*Reading*] That's I egad! *this huff bluff Colonel*—that's he—*is the rareſt fool in nature*—the devil he is!—*and as ſuch have I us'd him*—with all my heart, faith——*I had no better way of letting you know that I lodge in St.* James's *near the* Holy Lamb. *Lurewell.* Colonel, I am your moſt humble ſervant.

Stand. Hold, ſir, you ſha'n't go yet; I ha'n't deliver'd half my meſſage.

Wild. Upon my faith but you have, colonel.

Stand. Well, well, own your ſpleen; out with it, I know you're like to burſt.

Wild. I am ſo, egad! ha, ha, ha!

[*Laugh and point at one another.*

Stand. Ay, with all my heart, ha, ha!
Well, well, that's forc'd, Sir *Harry*.

Wild. I was never better pleas'd in all my life, by *Jupiter*.

Stand. Well, Sir *Harry*, 'tis prudence to hide your concern, when there's no help for't:— But to be ſerious now. The lady has ſent you back all your papers there. I was ſo juſt as not to look upon 'em.

Wild. I'm glad on't, ſir; for there were ſome things that I would not have you ſee.

Stand. All this ſhe has done for my ſake, and I deſire you would decline any farther pretenſions for your own ſake. So, honeſt, good natur'd Sir *Harry*, I'm your humble ſervant. [*Exit.*

Wild. Ha, ha, ha, poor colonel! O the delight of an ingenious miſtreſs! what a life and briſkneſs it adds to an amour, 'like the loves of mighty *Jove*, ſtill ſuing 'in different ſhapes.' A *legerdemain miſtreſs*, who, *præſto! paſs!* and ſhe's vaniſh'd; then *Hey!* in an inſtant in your arms again. [*Going.*

Enter Vizard.

Viz. Well met, Sir *Harry*; what news from the Iſland of Love?

Wild. Faith, we made but a broken voyage by your chart; but now I am bound for another port: I told you the colonel was my rival.

Viz. The colonel! curs'd misfortune! another! [*Aside.*

Wild. But the civileſt in the world; he brought me word where my miſtreſs lodges: The ſtory's too long to tell you now, for I muſt fly.

Viz. What! have you given over all thoughts of *Angelica?*

Wild. No, no, I'll think of her ſome other time. But now for the Lady *Lurewell:* Wit and beauty calls.

That miſtreſs ne'er can pall her lover's joys,
Whoſe wit can whet, whene'er her beauty cloys.
Her little amorous frauds all truths excel,
And make us happy, being deceiv'd ſo well. [Exit.

Viz. ſolus.——The colonel my rival too! how ſhall I manage? There is but one way—him and the knight will I ſet a tilting, where one cuts t'other's throat, and the ſurvivor's hang'd: So there will be two rivals pretty decently diſpos'd of. Since honour may oblige them to play the fool, why ſhould not neceſſity engage me to play the knave. [*Exit.*

SCENE, Lurewell's *Lodgings.*

Lurewell *and* Parly.

Lure. Has my ſervant brought me the money from my merchant?

Par. No, madam; he met alderman *Smuggler* at *Charing-Croſs,* who has promis'd to wait on you himſelf immediately.

Lure. 'Tis odd that this old rogue ſhou'd pretend to love me, and at the ſame time cheat me of my money.

Par. 'Tis well, madam, if he don't cheat you of your eſtate; for you ſay the writings are in his hands.

Lure. But what ſatisfaction can I get of him? Oh! here he comes.

Enter

Enter Smuggler.

Mr. Alderman, your ſervant; have you brought me any money, ſir?

Smug. Faith, madam, trading is very dead; what with paying the taxes, raiſing the cuſtoms, loſſes at ſea abroad, and maintaining our wives at home, the Bank is reduc'd very low.

Lure. Come, come, ſir, theſe evaſions won't ſerve your turn; I muſt have money, ſir——I hope you don't deſign to cheat me.

Smug. Cheat you, madam! have a care what you ſay: I'm an alderman, madam! Cheat you, madam! I have been an honeſt citizen theſe five and thirty years!

Lure. An honeſt citizen! bear witneſs, *Parly!* I ſhall trap him in more lies preſently.——Come, ſir, tho' I am a woman, I can take a courſe.

Smug. What courſe, madam? You'll go to law, will ye? I can maintain a ſuit of law, be it right or wrong, theſe forty years, I am ſure of that, thanks to the honeſt practice of the courts.

Lure. Sir, I'll blaſt your reputation, and ſo ruin your credit.

Smug. Blaſt my reputation! he, he, he! Why, I'm a religious man, madam; I have been very inſtrumental in the reformation of manners. Ruin my credit! ah, poor woman. There is but one way, madam,—you have a ſweet leering eye.

Lure. You inſtrumental in the reformation! How?

Smug. I whipt all the whores, cut and long-tail, out of the pariſh:—Ah! that leering eye!——*Then I voted for pulling down the playhouſe:*—Ah! that ogle, that ogle:—*Then my own pious example:*——Ah! that lip, that lip!

Lure. Here's a religious rogue for you now!——As I hope to be ſav'd, I have a good mind to beat the old monſter.

Smug. Madam, I have brought you about a hundred and fifty guineas, (a great deal of money as times go) and—

Lure. Come, give 'em me.

Smug. Ah! that hand, that hand, that pretty ſoft, white—I have brought it, you ſee; but the condition of the obligation is ſuch, that whereas that leering eye, that pouting lip, that pretty ſoft hand, that—you underſtand me; you underſtand, I'm ſure you do, you little rogue——

Lure. Here's a villain now, ſo covetous, 'that he 'won't wench upon his own coſt,' he would bribe me with my own money. I'll be reveng'd——Upon my word, Mr. Alderman, you make me bluſh; what d'ye mean, pray?

Smug. See here, madam.

[*Puts a piece of money in his mouth.*

Buſs and guinea, buſs and guinea, buſs and guinea,

Lure. Well, Mr. Alderman, you have ſuch pretty winning ways, that I will, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Smug. Will you indeed, he, he, he! my little cocket; and when? and where? and how?

Lure. 'Twill be a difficult point, ſir, to ſecure both our honours; you muſt therefore be diſguis'd, Mr. Alderman.

Smug. Pſhaw! no matter, I am an old fornicator. I'm not half ſo religious as I ſeem to be. You little rogue; why, I'm diſguis'd as I am; our ſanctity is all outſide, all hypocriſy.

Lure. No man is ſeen to come into this houſe after night-fall; you muſt therefore ſneak in, when 'tis dark, in woman's cloaths.

Smug. With all my heart.—I have a ſuit on purpoſe, my little cocket: I love to be diſguis'd, I cod. I make a very handſome woman, I cod I do.

Enter Servant, whiſpers Lurewell.

Lure. Oh! Mr. Alderman, ſhall I beg you to walk into the next room? here are ſome ſtrangers coming up.

Smug. Buſs and guinea firſt; ah, my little cocket!

[*Exit.*

Enter Wildair.

Wild. *My life, my ſoul, my all that heaven can give,*

Lure. *Death's life with thee, without thee death to live.*

Welcome,

Welcome, my dear Sir *Harry*; I see you got my directions.

Wild. Directions! in the most charming manner, thou dear *Machiavel* of intrigue.

Lure. Still brisk and airy, I find, Sir *Harry*.

Wild. The sight of you, madam, exalts my air, and makes joy lighten in my face.

Lure. I have a thousand questions to ask you, Sir *Harry*. How d'ye like *France?*

Wild. Ah! *est le plus beau pais du monde.*

Lure. Then what made you leave it so soon?

Wild. Madam, *vous voyez que je vous sui par-tout.*

Lure. O monsieur, *je vous suis fort obligée*—But, where's the court now?

Wild. At *Marli*, madam.

Lure. And where my Count *La Valier?*

Wild. His body's in the church of *Nôtre Dame*; I don't know where his soul is.

Lure. What disease did he die of?

Wild. A *duel*, madam; I was his *doctor*.

Lure. How d'ye mean?

Wild. As most doctors do, I kill'd him.

Lure. En cavalier, my dear knight errant; well, and how, and how; what intrigues, what gallantries are carrying on in the *Beau Monde?*

Wild. I shou'd ask you that question, madam, since your ladyship makes the *Beau Monde* wherever you come.

Lure. Ah! Sir *Harry*, I've been almost ruin'd, pester'd to death here, by the incessant attacks of a mighty colonel; he has besieg'd me 'as close as our army did 'Namur.'

Wild. I hope your ladyship did not surrender tho'.

Lure. No, no, but was forced to capitulate; but since you are come to raise the siege, we'll dance, and sing, and laugh.

Wild. And love and kiss—*Montrez moi votre chambre.*

Lure. Attende, attende, un peu—I remember, Sir *Harry*, you promis'd me in *Paris*, never to ask that impertinent question again.

Wild. Pshaw, madam, that was above two months

ago; beſides, madam, treaties made in *France* are never kept.

Lure. Wou'd you marry me, Sir *Harry?*

Wild. Oh! *Le marriage eſt un grand mal.*——But I will marry you.

Lure. Your word, ſir, is not to be rely'd on; if a gentleman will forfeit his honour in dealings of buſineſs, we may reaſonably ſuſpect his fidelity in an amour.

Wild. My honour in dealings of buſineſs! why, madam, I never had any buſineſs all my life.

Lure. Yes, Sir *Harry*, I have heard a very odd ſtory, and am ſorry that a gentleman of your figure ſhou'd undergo the ſcandal.

Wild. Out with it, madam.

Lure. Why, the merchant, ſir, that tranſmitted your bills of exchange to you in *France*, complains of ſome indirect and diſhonourable dealings.

Wild. Who, old *Smuggler!*

Lure. Ay, ay, you know him, I find.

Wild. I have ſome reaſon, I think; why, the rogue has cheated me of above five hundred pounds within theſe three years.

Lure. 'Tis your buſineſs then to acquit yourſelf publicly; for he ſpreads the ſcandal every where.

Wild. Acquit myſelf publicly!——Here, ſirrah, my coach; I'll drive inſtantly into the city, and cane the old villain round the *Royal-Exchange*; 'he ſhall run the 'gauntlet through a thouſand bruſht beavers and formal 'cravats.'

Lure. Why, he is in the houſe now, ſir.

Wild. What, in this houſe?

Lure. Ay, in the next room.

Wild. Then, ſirrah, lend me your cudgel.

Lure. Sir *Harry*, you won't raiſe a diſturbance in my houſe?

Wild. Diſturbance, madam, no, no; I'll beat him with the temper of a philoſopher. Here, Mrs. *Parly*, ſhew me the gentleman. [Exit *with* Parly.

Lure. Now ſhall I get the old monſter well beaten, and Sir *Harry* peſter'd next term with bloodſheds, batteries, coſts and damages, ſolicitors and attorneys; and if they don't

don't teize him out of his good humour, I'll never plot again. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to another Room in the ſame Houſe.*

Enter Smuggler.

Smug. Oh, this damn'd tide-waiter! A ſhip and cargo worth five thouſand pounds! why, 'tis richly worth five hundred perjuries.

Enter Wildair.

Wild. Dear Mr. Alderman, I'm your moſt devoted and humble ſervant

Smug. My beſt friend, Sir *Harry*, you're welcome to *England*.

Wild. I'll aſſure you, ſir, there's not a man in the king's dominions I am gladder to meet, dear, dear Mr. Alderman.

[*Bowing very low.*

Smug. O lord, ſir, you travellers have the moſt obliging ways with you.

Wild. There is a buſineſs, Mr. Alderman, fall'n out, which you may oblige me infinitely by——I am very ſorry that I am forc'd to be troubleſome; but neceſſity, Mr. Alderman.

Smug. Ay, ſir, as you ſay, neceſſity—But upon my word, ſir, I am very ſhort of money at preſent, but—

Wild. That's not the matter, ſir; I'm above an obligation that way; but the buſineſs is, I'm reduc'd to an indiſpenſible neceſſity of being oblig'd to you for a beating—Here take this cudgel.

Smug. A beating, ſir *Harry!* ha, ha, ha! I beat a knight baronet! an alderman turn cudgel-player! ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Upon my word, ſir, you muſt beat me, or I cudgel you; take your choice.

Smug. Pſhaw, pſhaw, you jeſt.

Wild. Nay, 'tis ſure as fate: ſo, Alderman, I hope you'll pardon my curioſity. [*Strikes him.*

Smug. Curioſity! Deuce take your curioſity, ſir; what d'ye mean?

Wild. Nothing at all; I'm but in jeſt, ſir.

Smug. O, I can take any thing in jeſt? but a man might imagine by the ſmartneſs of the ſtroke, that you were in downright earneſt.

Wild. Not in the leaſt, ſir; [*Strikes him.*] not in the leaſt indeed, ſir.

Smug. Pray, good ſir, no more of your jeſts, for they are the blunteſt jeſts that ever I knew.

Wild. [*Strikes.*] I heartily beg your pardon, with all my heart, ſir.

Smug. Pardon, ſir! well, ſir, that is ſatisfaction enough from a gentleman: But ſeriouſly now, if you paſs any more of your jeſts upon me, I ſhall grow angry.

Wild. I humbly beg your permiſſion to break one or two more. [*Strikes him.*

Smug. O lord, ſir, you'll break my bones: Are you mad, ſir? murder, felony, manſlaughter!

[Wild. *knocks him down.*

Wild. Sir, I beg you ten thouſand pardons; but I am abſolutely compell'd to't, upon my honour, ſir: nothing can be more averſe to my inclinations, than to jeſt with my honeſt, dear, loving, obliging friend, the Alderman.

[*Striking him all this while,* Smuggler *tumbles over and over, and ſhakes out his pocket-book on the floor*; Lurewell *enters, takes it up*]

Lure. The old rogue's pocket-book; this may be of uſe. [*Aſide.*] O lord, Sir *Harry*'s murdering the poor old man.———

Smug. O dear madam, I was beaten in jeſt, 'till I am murder'd in good earneſt.

Lure. Well, well, I'll bring you off, *ſeigneur—frappez, frappez!*

Smug. O! for charity's ſake, madam, reſcue a poor citizen.

Lure. O you barbarous man! hold! hold! *frappez plus rudement!*

Frappez! I wonder you are not aſham'd, [*Holding* Wild.] A poor reverend honeſt elder—[*helps* Smug. *up.*] It makes me weep to ſee him in this condition, poor man!

Now

Now the devil take you, Sir *Harry*—for not beating him harder. Well, my dear, you shall come at night, and I'll make you amends. [*Here Sir* Harry *takes snuff.*

Smug. Madam, I will have amends before I leave the place.

Sir how durst you use me thus?

Wild. Sir?

Smug. Sir, I say that I will have satisfaction.

Wild. With all my heart. [*Throws snuff into his eyes.*

Smug. O! murder, blindness, fire! O madam, madam, get me some water! water, fire, fire, water!

[*Exit with* Lurewell.

Wild. How pleasant is resenting an injury without passion! 'Tis the beauty of revenge.

Let statesmen plot, and under business groan,
And settling public quiet, lose their own;
Let soldiers drudge and fight for pay, or fame,
For when they're shot, I think 'tis much the same;
Let scholars vex their brains with mood and tense,
And mad with strength of reason, fools commence,
Losing their wits in searching after sense.
Their Summum Bonum *they must toil to gain,*
And seeking pleasure, spend their life in pain:
I make the most of life, no hour mispend,
Pleasure's the mean, and pleasure is my end.
No spleen, no trouble shall my time destroy,
Life's but a span, I'll every inch enjoy.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Standard *and* Vizard.

Stand. I Bring him word where she lodg'd! I the civilest rival in the world! 'Tis impossible.

Viz. I shall urge it no farther, sir.
I only thought, sir, that my character in the world might add authority to my words without so many repetitions.

Stand. Pardon me, dear *Vizard.*
Our belief struggles hard before it can be brought to yield to the disadvantage of what we love;
'Tis so great an abuse to our judgment, that it makes
the faults of our choice our own failing.'
But what said Sir *Harry?*

Viz. He pitied the poor credulous colonel, laugh'd heartily.
Flew away with all the raptures of a bridegroom, repeating these lines,

A mistress ne'er can pall her lover's joys,
Whose wit can whet, whene'er her beauty cloys.

Stand. A mistress ne'er can pall! By all my wrongs he whores her! And I'm made their property. Vengeance! *Vizard,* you must carry a note for me to Sir *Harry.*

Viz. What! a challenge! I hope you don't design to fight?

Stand. What! wear the livery of my king, and pocket an affront! 'twere an abuse to his sacred majesty; a soldier's sword, *Vizard,* should start of itself to redress it's master's wrong.

Viz. However, sir, I think it not proper for me to carry any such message between friends.

Stand. I have ne'er a servant here; what shall I do?

Viz.

Viz. There's *Tom Errand*, the porter, that plies at the *Blue Posts*, one who knows Sir *Harry* and his haunts very well; you may send a note by him.

Stand. Here, you, friend.

Viz. I have now some business, and must take my leave; I would advise you nevertheless against this affair.

Stand. No whispering now, nor telling of friends to prevent us. He that disappoints a man of an honourable revenge, may love him foolishly like a wife, but never value him as a friend.

Viz. Nay, the devil take him that parts you, say I. [*Exit.*

Enter Porter running.

Err. Did your honour call porter?

Stand. Is your name *Tom Errand?*

Err. People call me so, an't like your worship——

Stand. D'ye know Sir *Harry Wildair?*

Err. Ay, very well, Sir; he's one of my best master's; many a round half-crown have I had of his worship; he's newly come home from *France*, sir.

Stand. Go to the next coffee-house, and wait for me. [*Exit Errand.*

O woman, woman, how blest is man, when favour'd by your smiles, and how accurs'd when all those smiles are found but wanton baits to sooth us to destruction!

'Thus our chief joys with base allays are curst,
'And our best things, when once corrupted, worst.' [Exit.

Enter Wildair *and* Clincher senior *following.*

Clinch. sen. Sir, sir, sir, having some business of importance to communicate to you, I wou'd beg your attention to a trifling affair that I wou'd impart to your understanding.

Wild. What is your trifling business of importance, pray, sweet sir?

Clinch. sen. Pray, sir, are the roads deep between this and *Paris*.

Wild. Why that question, sir?

Clinch. ſen. Becauſe I deſign to go to the *Jubilee*, ſir; I underſtand that your are a traveller, ſir; there is an air of travel in the tie of your cravat; ſir—there is indeed, ſir—I ſuppoſe, ſir, you bought this lace in *Flanders*.

Wild. No, ſir, this lace was made in *Norway*.

Clinch. ſen. Norway, ſir!

Wild. Yes, ſir, of the ſhavings of deal-boards.

Clinch. ſen. That's very ſtrange now, faith—lace made of the ſhavings of deal-boards! Egad, ſir, you travellers ſee very ſtrange things abroad, very incredible things abroad, indeed. Well, I'll have a cravat of the very ſame lace before I come home.

Wild. But, ſir, what preparations have you made for your journey?

Clinch. ſen. A caſe of pocket-piſtols for the bravo's—and a ſwimming girdle.

Wild. Why theſe, ſir?

Clinch. ſen. O Lord! Sir, I'll tell you—ſuppoſe us in *Rome* now; away goes I to ſome ball—for I'll be a mighty beau. Then, as I ſaid, I go to ſome ball, or ſome bear-baiting, 'tis all one you know—then comes a fine *Italian Bona Roba*, and plucks me by the ſleeve, *Signior Angle, Signior Angle*—ſhe's a very fine lady, obſerve that—*Signior Angle*, ſays ſhe—*Signora*, ſays I, and trips after her to the corner of a ſtreet, ſuppoſe it *Ruſſel-Street* here, or any other ſtreet; then you know, I muſt invite her to the tavern, I can do no leſs.—There up comes her bravo; the *Italian* grows ſauſy, and I give him an *Engliſh* douſe of the face. I can box, ſir, box tightly; I was a 'prentice, ſir,—but then, ſir, he whips out his *ſtilletto*, and I whips out my *bull-dog*—ſlaps him through, trips down ſtairs, turns the corner of *Ruſſel-Street* again, and whips me into the ambaſſador's train, and there I'm ſafe as a beau behind the ſcenes.

Wild. Is your piſtol charg'd, ſir?

Clinch. ſen. Only a brace of bullets, that's all, ſir.

Wild. 'Tis a very fine piſtol, truly; pray let me ſee it.

Clinch. ſen. With all my heart, ſir.

Wild.

Wild. Hark'e, Mr. *Jubilee*, can you digeſt a brace of bullets?

Clinch. ſen. O by no means in the world, ſir!

Wild. I'll try the ſtrength of your ſtomach, however. Sir, you're a dead man. [*Preſenting the piſtol to his breaſt.*

Clinch. ſen. Conſider, dear ſir! I am going to the *Jubilee*, when I come home again, I am a dead man at your ſervice.

Wild. O very well, ſir! but take heed you are not ſo choleric for the future.

Clinch. ſen. Choleric, ſir! Oons! I deſign to ſhoot ſeven *Italians* a week, ſir.

Wild. Sir, you won't have provocation.

Clinch. ſen. Provocation, ſir! Zauns, ſir, I'll kill any man for treading upon my corns, and there will be a deviliſh throng of people there; they ſay that all the princes in *Italy* will be there.

Wild. And all the fops and fiddlers in *Europe*—But the uſe of your ſwimming girdle, pray, ſir?

Clinch. ſen. O Lord, ſir! That's eaſy. Suppoſe the ſhip caſt away; now, whilſt other fooliſh people are buſy at their prayers, I whip on my ſwimming girdle, clap a month's proviſion into my pocket, and ſails me away like an egg in a duck's belly.—And hark'e, ſir, I have a new project in my head. Where d'ye think my ſwimming girdle ſhall carry me upon this occaſion? 'Tis a new project.

Wild. Where, ſir?

Clinch. ſen. To *Civita Vecchia*, faith and troth, and ſo ſave the charges of my paſſage. Well, ſir, you muſt pardon me now, I'm going to ſee my miſtreſs. [*Exit.*

Wild. This fellow's an accompliſh'd aſs before he goes abroad. Well! this *Angelica* has got into my heart, and I can't get her out of my head. I muſt pay her t'other viſit. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *Lady* Darling's *Houſe.*

Enter Angelica.

Angel. Unhappy ſtate of woman! whoſe chief virtue is but ceremony, and our much boaſted modeſty but

' but a ſlaviſh reſtraint. The ſtrict confinement on our ' words, makes our thoughts ramble more; and what ' preſerves our outward fame, deſtroys our inward quiet. ' —'Tis hard that love ſhou'd be deny'd the privilege of ' hatred; that ſcandal and detraction ſhou'd be ſo much ' indulg'd, yet ſacred love and truth debar'd our con- ' verſation.'

Enter Darling, Clincher jun. *and* Dicky.

Darl. This is my daughter, couſin.

Dick. Now, ſir, remember your three ſcrapes.

Clinch. jun. ſaluting Angelica.]—— One, two, three, Your humble ſervant. Was not that right, *Dicky?*

Dick. Ay, faith, ſir; but why don't you ſpeak to her?

Clinch. jun. I beg your pardon, *Dicky*, I know my diſtance. Wou'd you have me ſpeak to a lady at the firſt ſight?

Dick. Ay, ſir, by all means; the firſt aim is the ſureſt.

Clinch. jun. Now for a good jeſt, to make her laugh heartily.——By *Jupiter Ammon* I'll go give her a kiſs.

[*Goes towards her.*

Enter Wildair, *interpoſing.*

Wild. 'Tis all to no purpoſe, I told you ſo before; your pitiful five guineas will never do—you may go, I'll outbid you.

Clinch. jun. What the devil! the madman's here again.

Darl. Bleſs me, couſin! what d'ye mean? Affront a gentleman of his quality in my houſe!

Clinch. jun. Quality——Why, madam, I don't know what you mean by your madmen, and your beaux, and your quality—they're all alike, I believe.

Darl. Pray, ſir, walk with me into the next room.

[*Exit* Darl. *leading* Clin. Dicky *follows.*

Angel. Sir, if your converſation be no more agreeable than 'twas the laſt time, I wou'd adviſe you to make your viſit as ſhort as you can.

Wild.

Wild. The offences of my laſt viſit, madam, bore their puniſhment in the commiſſion; and have made me as uneaſy till I receive pardon, as your ladyſhip can be till I ſue for it.

Angel. Sir *Harry*, I did not well underſtand the offence, and muſt therefore proportion it to the greatneſs of your apology; if you wou'd therefore have me think it light, take no great pains in an excuſe.

Wild. How ſweet muſt the lips be that guard that tongue! then, madam, no more of paſt offences, let us prepare for joys to come; let this ſeal my pardon. [*Kiſſes her hand.*] And this [*Again*] initiate me to farther happineſs.

Angel. Hold, ſir,——one queſtion, Sir *Harry*, and pray anſwer plainly—d'ye love me?

Wild. Love you! Does fire aſcend? Do hypocrites diſſemble? Uſurers love gold, or great men flattery? Doubt theſe, then queſtion that I love.

Angel. This ſhews your gallantry, ſir, but not your love.

Wild. View your own charms, madam, then judge my paſſion; your beauty raviſhes my eye, your voice my ear, and your touch has thrill'd my melting ſoul.

Angel. If your words be real, 'tis in your pow'r to raiſe an equal flame in me.——

Wild. Nay, then——I ſeize——

Angel. Hold, ſir, 'tis alſo poſſible to make me deteſt and ſcorn you worſe than the moſt profligate of your deceiving ſex.

Wild. Ha! A very odd turn this. I hope, madam, you only affect anger, becauſe you know your frowns are becoming.

Angel. Sir *Harry*, you being the beſt judge of your own deſigns, can beſt underſtand whether my anger ſhou'd be real or diſſembled; think what ſtrict modeſty ſhou'd bear, then judge of my reſentments.

Wild. Strict modeſty ſhou'd bear! Why faith, madam, I believe, the ſtricteſty modeſt may bear fifty guineas, and I don't believe 'twill bear one farthing more.

Angel. What d'ye mean, ſir?

Wild.

Wild. Nay, madam, what do you mean? If you go to that. I think now fifty guineas is a fine offer for your ſtrict modeſty, as you call it.

Angel. 'Tis more charitable, Sir *Harry*, to charge the impertinence of a man of your figure on his defect in underſtanding, than on his want of manners.—I'm afraid you're mad, ſir.

Wild. Why, madam, you're enough to make any man mad. 'Sdeath, are you not a——

Angel. What, ſir?

Wild. Why, a lady of—ſtrict modeſty, if you will have it ſo.

Angel. I ſhall never hereafter truſt common report, which repreſented you, ſir, a man of honour, wit, and breeding; for I find you very deficient in them all three. [*Exit.*

Wild. Now I find that the ſtrict pretences which the ladies of pleaſure make to ſtrict modeſty, is the reaſon why thoſe of quality are aſham'd to wear it.

Enter Vizard.

Viz. Ah! Sir *Harry*, have I caught you? Well, and what ſucceſs?

Wild. Succeſs! 'tis a ſhame for you young fellows in town here, to let the wenches grow ſo ſaucy: I offer'd her fifty guineas, and ſhe was in her airs preſently, and flew away in a huff. I cou'd have had a brace of counteſſes in *Paris* for half the money, and *je vous remercie* into the bargain.

Viz. Gone in her airs, ſay you! and did not you follow her?

Wild. Whither ſhou'd I follow her?

Viz. Into her bed-chamber, man; ſhe went on purpoſe. You a man of gallantry, and not underſtand that a lady's beſt pleas'd when ſhe puts on her airs, as you call it?

Wild. She talk'd to me of ſtrict modeſty, and ſtuff.

Viz. Certainly. Moſt women magnify their modeſty, for the ſame reaſon that cowards boaſt their courage, becauſe they have leaſt on't. Come, come, Sir *Harry*,

Harry, when you make your next assault, encourage your spirits with brisk *Burgundy*; if you succeed, 'tis well; if not, you have a fair excuse for your rudeness. I'll go in, and make your peace for what's past. Oh! I had almost forgot——Col. *Standard* wants to speak with you about some business.

Wild. I'll wait upon him presently; d'ye know where he may be found?

Viz. In the Piazza of *Covent-Garden*, about an hour hence, I promis'd to see him; and there you may meet him, to have your throat cut. [*Aside.*] I'll go in and intercede for you.

Wild. But no foul play with the lady, *Vizard.* [*Exit.*

Viz. No fair play, I can assure you. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Street before* Lurewell's *Lodgings*; Clincher sen. *and* Lurewell *coquetting in the Balcony.*

Enter Standard.

Stand. How weak is reason in disputes of love? That daring reason which so oft pretends to question works of high omnipotence, yet poorly truckles to our weakest passions, and yields implicit faith to foolish love, paying blind zeal to faithless women's eyes. I've heard her falshood with such pressing proofs, that I no longer should distrust it. Yet still my love wou'd baffle demonstration, and make impossibilities seem probable. [*Looks up.*] Ha! that fool too! what, stoop so low as that animal!—'tis true, women once fall'n, like cowards in despair, will stick at nothing; there's no medium in their actions. They must be bright as angels, or black as fiends. But now for my revenge, I'll kick her cully before her face, call her whore, curse the whole sex, and leave her. [*Goes in.*

Lurewell *comes down with* Clincher. *The Scene changes to a Dining-Room.*

Lure. O Lord, sir, it is my husband! what will become of you?

Clinch.

Clinch. sen. Ah! your husband! oh, I shall be murdered: What shall I do! where shall I run! I'll creep into an oven; I'll climb up the chimney; I'll fly; I'll swim;—I wish to the Lord I were at the *Jubilee* now.——

Lure. Can't you think of any thing, sir?

Clinch. sen. Think! not I; I never cou'd think to any purpose in my life.

Enter Tom Errand.

Lure. What do you want, sir?

Err. Madam, I am looking for Sir *Harry Wildair*; I saw him come in here this morning; and did imagine he might be here still, if he is not gone.

Lure. A lucky hit! here, friend, change cloaths with this gentleman, quickly, strip.

Clinch. sen. Ay, ay, quickly strip: I'll give you half a crown to boot. Come here; so. [*They change cloaths.*

Lure. Now slip you [*To* Clinch.] down stairs, and wait at the door till my husband be gone; and get you in there [*To the porter*] till I call you. [*Puts* Errand *in the next room.*

Enter Standard.

Oh, sir! are you come? I wonder, sir, how you have the confidence to approach me after so base a trick?

Stand. O madam, all your artifices won't avail.

Lure. Nay, sir, your artifices won't avail. I thought, sir, that I gave you caution enough against troubling me with Sir *Harry Wildair*'s company when I sent his letters back by you; yet you, forsooth, must tell him where I lodg'd, and expose me again to his impertinent courtship!

Stand. I expose you to his courtship!

Lure. I'll lay my life you'll deny it now. Come, come, sir; a pitiful lie is as scandalous to a red coat as an oath to a black. 'Did not Sir *Harry* himself tell 'me, that he found out by you where I lodg'd?'

Stand. You're all lies: first, your heart is false; your eyes are double; one look belies another; and then your

your tongues does contradict them all—madam, I see a little devil just now hammering out a lie in your *Pericranium*.

Lure. As I hope for mercy, he's in the right on't. [*Aside.*] 'Hold, Sir, you have got the play-house cant 'upon your tongue; and think, that wit may privilege 'your railing: but I must tell you, sir, that what is 'satire upon the stage, is ill manners here.'

Stand. 'What is feign'd upon the stage, is here in 'reality real falshood. Yes, yes, madam,'—I expos'd you to the court of your fool *Clincher*, too; I hope your female wiles will impose that upon me—also—

Lure. Clincher! Nay, now you're stark mad. I know no such person.

Stand. O woman in perfection! not know him? 'Slife, madam, can my eyes, my piercing jealous eyes, be so deluded? Nay, madam, my nose could not mistake him; for I smelt the fop by his *Pulvilio* from the balcony down to the street.

Lure. The balcony! ha, ha, ha! the balcony; I'll be hang'd but he has mistaken Sir *Harry Wildair*'s footman with a new *French* livery, for a beau.

Stand. 'Sdeath, madam, what is there in me that looks like a cully! did not I see him?

Lure. No, no, you cou'd not see him; you're dreaming, colonel. Will you believe you eyes, now that I have rubb'd them open?—Here, you friend.

Enter Errand *in* Clincher's *cloaths*.

Stand. This is illusion all; my eyes conspire against themselves. 'Tis legerdemain.

Lure. Legerdemain! is that all your acknowledgement for your rude behaviour?—Oh, what a curse is it to love as I do!—'but don't presume too far, sir, on 'my affection: for such ungenerous usage will soon re-'turn my tir'd heart.'—Begone, sir, [*To the porter*] to your impertinent master, and tell him I shall never be at leisure to receive any of his troublesome visits.—Send to me to know when I shou'd be at home!—'be gone, 'sir?'

'sir?' [*Exit Errand*]—I am sure he has made me an unfortunate woman. [*Weeps*

Stand. Nay then there is no certainty in nature; and truth is only falshood well disguis'd.

Lure. Sir, had not I own'd my fond foolish passion, I shou'd not have been subject to such unjust suspicions: but it is an ungrateful return. [*Weeping.*

Stand. 'Now, where are all my firm resolves? I will 'believe her just. My passion rais'd my jealousy; then 'why mayn't love be as blind in finding faults, as in 'excusing them?'—I hope, madam, you'll pardon me, since jealousy, that magnify'd my suspicion, is as much the effect of love, as my easiness in being satisfy'd.

Lure. Easiness in being satisfy'd! 'you men have 'got an insolent way of extorting pardon, by persisting 'in your faults.' No, no, sir; cherish your suspicions, and feed upon your jealousy: 'tis fit meat for your squeamish stomach.

With me all women shou'd this rule pursue:
Who think us false, shou'd never find us true.

[*Exit* in a rage.

Enter Clincher *senior, in the Porter's Cloaths.*

Clinch. sen. Well, intrigueing is the prettiest, pleasantest thing, for a man of my parts:—How shall we laugh at the husband, when he is gone?—How fillily he looks! he's in labour of horns already.—To make a colonel a cuckold! 'twill be rare news for the alderman.

Stand. All this Sir *Harry* has occasion'd; but he's brave, and will afford me a just revenge:—O! this is the porter I sent the challenge by——Well, sir, have you found him?

Clinch. sen. What the devil does he mean now?

Stand. Have you given Sir *Harry* the note, fellow?

Clinch. sen. The note! what note?

Stand. The letter, blockhead, which I sent by you to Sir *Harry Wildair*; have you seen him?

Clinch. sen. O lord, what shall I say now? Seen him? Yes, sir—no, sir.—I have, sir—I have not, sir.

Stand.

Stand. The fellow's mad. Anſwer me directly ſirrah, or I'll break your head.

Clinch. ſen. I know Sir *Harry* very well, ſir; but as to the note, ſir, I can't remember a word on't: truth is I have a very bad memory.

Stand. O ſir, I'll quicken your memory. [*Strikes him.*

Clinch. ſen. Zauns, ſir, hold!—I did give him the note.

Stand. And what anſwer?

Clinch. ſen I mean, I did not give him the note.

Stand. What d'ye banter, raſcal? [*Strikes him again.*

Clinch. ſen. Hold, ſir, hold! He did ſend an anſwer.

Stand. What was't, villain?

Clinch. ſen. Why, truly ſir, I have forgot it: I told you that I had a very treacherous memory.

Stand. I'll engage you ſhall remember me this month, raſcal.

[*Beats him off, and* exit.

Enter Lurewell *and* Parly.

Lure. Fortboon, fortboon, fortboon! This is better than I expected; but fortune ſtill helps the induſtrious.

Enter Clincher *ſenior.*

Clinch. ſen. Ah! The devil take all intriguing, ſay I, and him who firſt invented canes—That curs'd colonel has got ſuch a knack of beating his men, that he has left the mark of a collar of bandileers about my ſhoulders.

Lure. O, my poor gentleman! And was it beaten?

Clinch. ſen. Yes, I have been beaten. But where's my cloaths? my cloaths?

Lure. What, you won't leave me ſo ſoon, my dear, will ye?

Clinch. ſen. Will ye! If ever I peep into a colonel's tent again, may I be forc'd to run the gauntlet.—But my cloaths, madam.

Lure. I ſent the porter down ſtairs with them: Did not you meet him?

Clinch. ſen. Meet him! No, not I.

Par. No! He went out of the back-door, and is run clear away, I'm afraid.

Clinch. ſen.

Clinch. sen. Gone, say you! and with my cloaths! my fine *Jubilee* cloaths!—O, the rogue, the thief!—I'll have him hang'd for murder.—But how shall I get home in this pickle?

Par. I'm afraid, sir, the colonel will be back presently, for he dines at home.

Clinch. sen. Oh, then I must sneak off!
Was ever such an unfortunate beau,
To have his coat well thrash'd, and lose his coat also?
[*Exit.*

Lure. Thus the noble Poet spoke truth:

Nothing suits worse with vice than want of sense:
Fools are still wicked at their own expence.

Par. Methinks, madam, the injuries you have suffer'd by men must be very great, to raise such heavy resentments against the whole sex.

Lure. The greatest injury that woman cou'd sustain; they robb'd me of that jewel, which preserv'd, exalts our sex almost to angels; but destroy'd, debases us below the worst of brutes, mankind.

Par. But I think, madam, your anger shou'd be only confin'd to the author of your wrongs.

Lure. The author! alas, I know him not, 'which 'makes my wrongs the greater.'

Par. Not know him! 'Tis odd, madam, that a man should rob you of that same jewel you mentioned, and you not know him.

Lure. Leave trifling;—'tis a subject that always sours my temper: But since, by thy faithful service, I have some reason to confide in your secrecy, hear the strange relation.—Some twelve years ago, I liv'd at my father's house in *Oxfordshire*, blest with innocence, the ornamental, but weak guard of blooming beauty: I was then just fifteen, 'an age fatal to the female sex:' our youth is tempting, our innocence credulous, romances moving, love powerful, and men are—villains. Then it happened, that three young gentlemen from the university coming into the country, and being benighted, and strangers, call'd at my father's: He was very glad of their company, and offer'd them the entertainment of his house.

Par.

Par. Which they accepted, no doubt: Oh! these strolling collegians are never abroad, but upon some mischief.

Lure. They had some private frolic or design in their heads, as appear'd by their not naming one another, which my father perceiving, out of civility, made no enquiry into their affairs; two of them had a heavy, pedantic, university air, a sort of a disagreeable scholastic boorishness in their behaviour; but the third!

Par. Ah! the third, madam;—the third of all things, they say, is very critical.

Lure. He was—but in short, nature cut him out for my undoing; he seem'd to be about eighteen.

Par. A fit match for your fifteen as cou'd be.

Lure. He had a genteel sweetness in his face, a graceful comeliness in his person, and his tongue was fit to sooth soft innocence to ruin. 'His very looks were 'witty, and his expressive eyes spoke softer, prettier 'things, than words cou'd frame.

'*Par.* There will be mischief by and by; I never heard 'a woman talk so much of eyes, but there were tears 'presently after.'

Lure. His discourse was directed to my father, but his looks to me. After supper I went to my chamber, and read *Cassandra*, then went to bed, and dreamt of him all night, 'rose in the morning, and made verses,' so fell desperately in love.—My father was so well pleas'd with his conversation, that he begg'd their company next day; they consented, and next night, *Parly*——

Par. Ah, next night, madam,—next night (I'm afraid) was a night indeed.

Lure. He brib'd my maid, with his gold, out of her honesty; and me, with his rhetoric, out of my honour. —She admitted him to my chamber, and there he vow'd, and swore, and wept, and sigh'd—and conquer'd.

[*Weeps.*

Par. A lack-a-day, poor fifteen! [*Weeps.*

Lure. He swore that he wou'd come down from *Oxford* in a fortnight, and marry me.

Par.

Par. The old bait! the old bait?—I was cheated juſt ſo myſelf. [*Aſide.*] But had not you the wit to know his name all this while?

Lure. Alas! what wit had innocence like mine? He told me, that he was under an obligation to his companions of concealing himſelf then, but that he would write to me in two days, and let me know his name and quality. After all the binding oaths of conſtancy, 'joining 'hands, exchanging hearts,' I gave him a ring with this motto, *love and honour*; then we parted, but I never ſaw the dear deceiver more.

Par. No, nor never will, I warrant you.

Lure. I need not tell my griefs, which my father's death made a fair pretence for; he left me ſole heireſs and executrix to three thouſand pounds a year: At laſt, my love for this ſingle diſſembler turn'd to a hatred of the whole ſex; and reſolving to divert my melancholy, and make my large fortune ſubſervient to my pleaſure and revenge, I went to travel, where, in moſt courts of *Europe*, I have done ſome execution. Here I will play my laſt ſcene; then retire to my country houſe, live ſolitary, and die a penitent.

Par. But don't you ſtill love this dear diſſembler?

Lure. Moſt certainly: 'Tis love of him that keeps my anger warm, 'repreſenting the baſeneſs of mankind full 'in view; and makes my reſentments work—We ſhall 'have that old impotent lecher, *Smuggler*, here to night; 'I have a plot to ſwinge him, and his preciſe nephew, '*Vizard*.

'*Par.* I think, madam, you manage every body that 'comes in your way.

'*Lure.* No, *Parly*; thoſe men, whoſe pretenſions I 'found juſt and honourable, I fairly diſmiſs'd, by letting 'them know my firm reſolutions never to marry. But 'thoſe villains that wou'd attempt my honour, I've ſel-'dom fail'd to manage.

'*Par.* What d'ye think of the colonel, madam? I ſup-'poſe his deſigns are honourable.

'*Lure.* That man's a riddle; there's ſomething of ho-'nour in his temper that pleaſes; I'm ſure he loves me 'too, becauſe he's ſoon jealous, and ſoon ſatisfy'd. But

'he's

'he's a man ſtill.—When I once tried his pulſe about 'marriage, his blood ran as low as a coward's. He ſwore 'indeed, that he lov'd me, but cou'd not marry me, for- 'ſooth, becauſe he was engag'd elſewhere. So poor a 'pretence made me diſdain his paſſion, which otherwiſe 'might have been uneaſy to me.—But hang him, I 'have teiz'd him enough.—Beſides, *Parly*, I begin to 'be tir'd of my revenge:'—But this buſs and guinea I muſt maul once more. I'll hanſel his woman's cloaths for him. Go get me pen and ink; I muſt write to *Vizard* too.

Fortune, this once aſſiſt me as before;
Two ſuch machines can never work in vain,
As thy propitious wheel, and my projecting brain.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE, *Covent-Garden.*

Wildair *and* Standard *meeting.*

Stand. I Thought, Sir *Harry*, to have met you ere this in a more convenient place; but ſince my wrongs were without ceremony, my revenge ſhall be ſo too. Draw, ſir!

Wild. Draw, ſir! What ſhall I draw?

Stand. Come, come, ſir, I like your facetious humour well enough; it ſhews courage and unconcern. I know you're brave; and therefore uſe you thus. Draw your ſword.

Wild. Nay, to oblige you, I will draw; but the devil take me if I fight.—Perhaps, colonel, this is the prettieſt blade you have ſeen.

Stand. I doubt not but the arm is good; and therefore think both worth my reſentment. Come, ſir.

Wild. But, prithee colonel, doſt think that I am ſuch a madman, as to ſend my ſoul to the devil, and body to the worms *upon every fool's errand?* [*Aſide.*

Stand. I hope you're no coward, ſir.

Wild. Coward, ſir! I have eight thouſand pounds a year, ſir.

Stand. You fought in *Flanders*, to my knowledge.

Wild. Ay, for the ſame reaſon that I wore a red coat; becauſe 'twas faſhionable.

Stand. Sir, you fought a *French* Count in *Paris*.

Wild. True, ſir; but there was no danger of lands, nor tenements: Beſides, he was a beau, like myſelf. Now you're a ſoldier, colonel, and fighting's your trade, and I think it downright madneſs to contend with any man in his profeſſion.

Stand. Come, ſir, no more dallying: I ſhall take very unſeemly methods, if you don't ſhew yourſelf a gentleman.

Wild. A gentleman! Why there again now. A gentleman! I tell you once more, colonel, that I am a baronet, and have eight thouſand pounds a year. I can dance, ſing, ride, fence, underſtand the languages. Now, I can't conceive how running you through the body ſhou'd contribute one jot more to my gentility. But pray, colonel, I had forgot to aſk you, what's the quarrel?

Stand. A woman, ſir.

Wild. Then I put up my ſword. Take her.

Stand. Sir, my honour's concerned.

Wild. Nay, if your honour be concern'd with a woman, get it out of her hands as ſoon as you can. An honourable lover is the greateſt ſlave in nature; ſome will ſay, the greateſt fool. Come, come, colonel, this is ſomething about the lady *Lurewell*, I warrant; I can give you ſatisfaction in that affair.

Stand. Do ſo then immediately.

Wild. Put up your ſword firſt; you know I dare fight: But I had much rather make you a friend than an enemy. I can aſſure you, this lady will prove too hard for one of your temper. You have too much honour, too much in conſcience, to be a favourite with the ladies.

Stand.

Stand. I'm assur'd, sir, she never gave you any encouragement.——

Wild. A man can never hear reason with a sword in his hand. Sheath your weapon; and then if I don't satisfy you, sheath it in my body.

Stand. Give me but demonstration of her granting you any favour, and it is enough.

Wild. Will you take my word?

Stand. Pardon me, sir, I cannot.

Wild. Will you believe your own eyes?

Stand. 'Tis ten to one whether I shall or no, they have deceiv'd me already.

Wild. That's hard—But some means I shall devise for your satisfaction—We must fly this place, else that cluster of mob will overwhelm us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mob, Tom Errand's *Wife hurrying in* Clincher senior *in* Errand's *cloaths.*

Wife. Oh, the villain, the rogue, he has murder'd my husband: Ah! my poor *Timothy!* [*Crying.*

Clin. sen. Dem your *Timothy!*—your husband has murder'd me, woman; for he has carry'd away my fine *Jubilee* cloaths.

Wife. Ay, you cut-throat, have you not got his cloaths upon your back there?—Neighbours, don't you know poor *Timothy*'s coat and apron?

Mob. Ay, ay, it is the same.

First Mob. What shall we do with him, neighbours?

Second Mob. We'll pull him in pieces.

First Mob. No, no; then we may be hang'd for murder: But we'll drown him.

Clin. sen. Ah, good people, pray don't drown me; for I never learnt to swim in all my life. Ah, this plaguy intriguing!

Mob. Away with him, away with him to the *Thames.*

Clin. sen. Oh, if I had but my *swimming girdle* now.

Enter Constable.

Const. Hold, neighbours, I command the peace.

Wife. O Mr. Conſtable, here's a rogue that has murder'd my huſband, and robb'd him of his cloaths.

Conſt. Murder and robbery! then he muſt be a gentleman. Hands off there; he muſt not be abus'd.—Give an account of yourſelf. Are you a gentleman?

Clin. ſen. No, ſir, I am a beau.

Conſt. A beau! Then you have kill'd nobody, I'm perſuaded. How came you by theſe cloaths, ſir?

Clin. ſen. You muſt know, ſir, that walking along, ſir, I don't know how, ſir; I can't tell where, ſir; and ſo the porter and I chang'd cloaths, ſir.

Conſt. Very well! the man ſpeaks reaſon, and like a gentleman.

Wife. But pray, Mr. Conſtable, aſk him how he chang'd cloaths with him.

Conſt. Silence, woman! and don't diſturb the court.—Well, ſir, how did you change cloaths?

Clin. ſen. Why, ſir, he pull'd off my coat, and I drew off his: So I put on his coat, and he put on mine.

Conſt. Why, neighbour, I don't find that he's guilty: Search him; and if he carries no arms about him, we'll let him go. [*They ſearch his pockets, and pull out his piſtols.*

Clin. ſen. O *Gemini!* My *Jubilee* piſtols!

Conſt. What, a caſe of piſtols! Then the caſe is plain. Speak, what are you, ſir? Whence came you, and whither go you?

Clin. ſen. Sir, I came from *Ruſſel-Street*, and am going to the *Jubilee*.

Wife. You ſhall go to the gallows, you rogue.

Conſt. Away with him, away with him to *Newgate*, ſtraight.

Clin. ſen. I ſhall go to the *Jubilee* now, indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Wildair *and* Standard.

Wild. In ſhort, colonel, 'tis all nonſenſe: Fight for a woman! Hard by is the lady's houſe, if you pleaſe we'll wait on her together: You ſhall draw your ſword; I'll draw my ſnuff-box: You ſhall produce your wounds receiv'd in war; I'll relate mine by *Cupid's* dart: 'You 'ſhall look big; I'll ogle:' You ſhall ſwear; I'll ſigh: You ſhall *ſa, ſa,* and I'll *coupée*; and if ſhe flies not to my

my arms like a hawk to its perch, my dancing-master deserves to be damn'd.

Stand. With the generality of women, I grant you these arts may prevail.

Wild. Generality of women! Why there again, you're out. They're all alike, sir; I never heard of any one that was particular, but one.

Stand. Who was she, pray?

Wild. Penelope, I think she's call'd, and that's a poetical story too. When will you find a poet in our age make a woman so chaste?

Stand. Well, Sir *Harry*, your facetious humour can disguise falshood, and make calumny pass for satire; but you have promis'd me ocular demonstration that she favours you: Make that good, and I shall then maintain faith and female to be as inconsistent as truth and falshood.

Wild. 'Nay, by what you told me, I am satisfied 'that she imposes on us all: And *Vizard* too seems what 'I still suspected him: But his honesty once mistrusted, 'spoils his knavery:'—But will you be convinc'd, if our plot succeeds?

Stand. I rely on your word and honour, Sir *Harry*; 'which if I doubted, my distrust wou'd cancel the obli-'gation of their security.'

Wild. Then meet me half an hour hence at the *Rummer*. You must oblige me by taking a hearty glass with me toward the fitting me out for a certain project, which this night I undertake.

Stand. I guess by the preparation, that woman's the design.

Wild. Yes, faith.—I am taken dangerous ill with two foolish maladies, modesty and love; the first I'll cure with *Burgundy*, and my love by a night's lodging with the damsel. A sure remedy. *Probatum est.*

Stand. I'll certainly meet you, sir.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Clincher junior *and* Dicky.

Clin. jun. Ah! *Dicky,* this *London* is a ſad place, a ſad vicious place: I wiſh that I were in the country again. And this brother of mine! I'm ſorry he's ſo great a rake: I had rather ſee him dead than ſee him thus.

Dick. Ay, ſir, he'll ſpend his whole eſtate at this ſame Jubilee. Who d'ye think lives at this ſame Jubilee?

Clin. jun. Who, pray?

Dick. The Pope.

Clin. jun. The devil he does! My brother go to the place where the Pope dwells! He's bewitch'd ſure!

Enter Tom Errand *in* Clincher ſenior's *cloaths.*

Dick. Indeed, I believe he is, for he's ſtrangely alter'd.

Clin. jun. Alter'd! Why he looks like a jeſuit already.

Err. This lace will ſell. What a blockhead was the fellow to truſt me with his coat! If I can get croſs the garden, down to the water-ſide, I am pretty ſecure. [*Aſide.*

Clin. jun. Brother!—Alaw! O *Gemini!* Are you my brother?

Dick. I ſeize you in the king's name, ſir.

Err. O lord! Shou'd this prove ſome parliament man now!

Clin. jun. Speak, you rogue, what are you?

Err. A poor porter, ſir, and going of an errand.

Dick. What errand? Speak, you rogue.

Err. A fool's errand, I'm afraid.

Clin. jun. Who ſent you?

Err. A beau, ſir.

Dick. No, no; the rogue has murder'd your brother, and ſtript him of his cloaths.

Clin. jun. Murder'd my brother! O *crimini!* O my poor Jubilee brother!—Stay, by *Jupiter Ammon,* I'm heir tho': ſpeak, ſirrah, have you kill'd him? Confeſs that you have kill'd him, and I'll give you half a crown.

Err.

Err. Who, I, sir? Alack-a-day, sir, I never kill'd any man, but a carrier's horse once.

Clin. jun. Then you shall certainly be hang'd; but confess that you kill'd him, and we'll let you go.

Err. Telling the truth hangs a man, but confessing a lie can do no harm; besides, if the worst come to the worst, I can but deny it again—Well, sir, since I must tell you, I did kill him.

Clin. jun. Here's your money, sir.—But are you sure you kill'd him dead?

Err. Sir, I'll swear it before any judge in *England*.

Dick. But are you sure that he's *dead in law?*

Err. Dead in law? I can't tell whether he be *dead in law*. But he's as dead as a door-nail; for I gave him seven knocks on the head with a hammer.

Dick. Then you have the estate by statute. Any man that is knock'd o'th' head is *dead in law*.

Clin. jun. But are you sure he was *compos mentis* when he was kill'd?

Err. I suppose he was, sir; for he told me nothing to the contrary afterwards.

Clin. jun. Hey! Then I go to the *Jubilee*—Strip, sir, strip. By *Jupiter Ammon*, strip.

Dick. Ah! don't swear, sir.

[*Puts on his brother's cloaths.*

Clin. jun. Swear, sir! Zoons, han't I got the estate, sir? Come, sir, now I'm in mourning for my brother.

Err. I hope you'll let me go now, sir.

Clin. jun. Yes, yes, sir; but you must do me the favour to swear positively before a magistrate, that you kill'd him dead, that I may enter upon the estate without any trouble. By *Jupiter Ammon*, all my religion's gone, since I put on these fine cloaths—Hey, call me a coach somebody.

Err. Ay, master, let me go, and I'll call one immediately.

Clin. jun. No, no; *Dicky*, carry this spark before a justice, and when he has made oath, you may discharge him. And I'll go see *Angelica*.

[*Exeunt* Dick *and* Errand.]

Now that I'm an elder brother, I'll court, and swear,

and rant, and rake, and go to the *Jubilee* with the beſt of them. [*Exit.*

SCENE, Lurewell's *Houſe.*

Enter Lurewell *and* Parly.

Lure. Are you ſure that *Vizard* had my letter?

Par. Yes, yes, madam; one of your ladyſhip's footmen gave it to him in the Park, and he told the bearer, with all tranſports of joy, that he wou'd be punctual to a minute.

Lure. Thus moſt villains ſome time or other are punctual to their ruin; and hypocriſy, by impoſing on the world, at laſt deceives itſelf. Are all things prepar'd for his reception?

Par. Exactly to your ladyſhip's order; the Alderman too is juſt come, dreſs'd and cook'd up for iniquity.

Lure. Then he has got woman's cloaths on?

Par. Yes, madam, and has paſs'd upon the family for your nurſe.

Lure. Convey him into that cloſet, and put out the candles, and tell him, I'll wait on him preſently.

[*As* Parly *goes to put out the candles, ſomebody knocks.*

'*Lure.* This muſt be ſome clown without manners, or 'gentleman above ceremony. Who's there?

'*Wildair* ſings.

'*Thus* Damon *knock'd at* Celia's *door,*
'*He ſigh'd, and begg'd, and wept, and ſwore,*
'*The ſign was ſo,*
'[knocks.]
'*She anſwer'd, no.*
'[knocks thrice.]
'*No, no, no.*
'*Again he ſigh'd, again he pray'd,*
'*No,* Damon, *no, I am afraid:*
'*Conſider,* Damon, *I'm a maid.*

'*Conſider,*

'Conſider,
'No,
'I'm a maid,
'No, &c.
'At laſt his ſighs and tears made way,
'She roſe, and ſoftly turn'd the key:
'Come in, ſaid ſhe, but do not ſtay.
'I may conclude
'You will be rude,
'But if you are, you may.'

"Lure. *This muſt be Sir* Harry, *tell him I'm not to* "*be ſpoke with.*

"Par. *Sir, my lady's not to be ſpoke with.*

"Wild. *I muſt have that from her own mouth, Mrs.*

"Par. *Play, gentlemen.*" [The muſic plays.

Enter Sir Harry.

Lure. 'Tis too early for ſerenading, Sir *Harry.*

Wild. Wherefoever love is, there muſic is proper; there's an harmonious conſent in their natures, and when rightly join'd, they make up the chorus of earthly happineſs.

Lure. But, Sir *Harry,* what tempeſt drives you here at this hour?

Wild. No tempeſt, madam, but 'as fair weather as 'ever entic'd a citizen's wife to cuckold her huſband in 'freſh air.' Love, madam. [Wild. *taking her by the hand.*

Lure. *As pure and white as angels ſoft deſires,*

Wild. *Fierce, as when ripe conſenting beauty fires.*

Is't not ſo?

Lure. O villain! What privilege has men to our deſtruction, that thus they hunt our ruin? [*Aſide.*] If this be a love token, [Wild. *drops a ring, ſhe takes it up.*] your miſtreſſes favours hang very looſe about you, ſir.

Wild. I can't, juſtly, madam, pay your trouble of taking it up by any thing, but deſiring you to wear it.

Lure. You gentlemen have the cunningeſt ways of playing the fool, and are ſo induſtrious in your profuſeneſs. Speak ſeriouſly, am I beholden to chance or deſign for this ring?

Wild. To design, upon my honour.—And I hope my design will succeed. [*Aside.*

Lure. *And what shall I give you for such a fine thing?*
Wild. *You'll give me another, you'll give me another fine thing.* [*Both sing.*

Lure. Shall I be free with you, Sir *Harry?*

Wild. With all my heart, madam, so I may be free with you.

Lure. Then plainly, sir, I shall beg the favour to see you some other time; for at this very minute I have two lovers in the house.

Wild. Then to be as plain, I must be gone this minute, for I must see another mistress within these two hours.

Lure. Frank and free.

Wild. As you with me—Madam, your most humble servant. [*Exit.*

Lure. Nothing can disturb his humour. Now for my merchant and *Vizard.* [*Exit and takes the candles with her.*

Enter Parly, *leading in* Smuggler, *dress'd in woman's cloaths.*

Par. This way, Mr. Alderman.

Smug. Well, Mrs. *Parly*,—I'm oblig'd to you for this trouble, here are a couple of shillings for you. Times are hard, very hard, indeed; but next time I'll steal a pair of silk stockings from my wife, and bring them to you.—'What are you fumbling about my pockets for?'

Par. 'Only setting the plaits of your gown;' here, sir, get into this closet, and my lady will wait on you presently. [*Puts him into the closet, runs out, and returns with* Vizard.

Viz. Where would'st thou lead me, my dear auspicious little pilot?

Par. You're almost in port, sir; my lady's in the closet, and will come out to you immediately.

Viz. Let me thank thee as I ought. [*Kisses her.*

Par. Pshaw, who has hir'd me best; a couple of shillings, or a couple of kisses? [*Exit.*

Viz.

Viz. Propitious darkneſs guides the lover's ſteps, and night that ſhadows outward ſenſe, lights up our inward joy. 'Night! The great awful ruler of mankind, 'which, like the *Perſian* monarch, hides its royalty to 'raiſe the veneration of the world. Under thy eaſy 'reign diſſemblers may ſpeak truth; all ſlaviſh forms 'and ceremonies laid aſide, and generous villainy may 'act without conſtraint.'

Smug. [*Peeping out of the cloſet.*] Bleſs me! What voice is this?

Viz. 'Our hungry appetites, like the wild beaſts of 'prey, now ſcour about, to gorge their craving maws;' the pleaſure of hypocriſy, like a chain'd lion, once broke looſe, wildly indulges its new freedom, ranging through all unbounded joys.

Smug. My nephew's voice, and certainly poſſeſs'd with an evil ſpirit; he talks as prophanely as an actor poſſeſs'd with a poet.

Viz. Ha! I hear a voice: madam,——my life, my happineſs, where are you, madam?

Smug. Madam! He takes me for a woman too: I'll try him. Where have you left your ſanctity, Mr. *Vizard.*

Viz. Talk no more of that ungrateful ſubject—I left it where it has only buſineſs, with day-light; 'tis needleſs to wear a maſk in the dark.

'*Smug.* O the rogue, the rogue!—The world takes 'you for a very ſober, virtuous gentleman.

'*Viz.* Ay, madam, that adds ſecurity to all my plea-'ſure.—With me a cully-'ſquire may ſquander his eſ-'tate, and ne'er be thought a ſpendthrift——With me 'a holy elder may zealouſly be drunk, and toaſt his 'tuneful noiſe in ſack, to make it hold forth clearer.—'But what is moſt my praiſe, the formal rigid ſhe, that 'rails at vice and men, with me ſecures her looſeſt plea-'ſures, and her ſtricteſt honour——ſhe who with ſcorn-'ful mien, and virtuous pride, diſdains the name of whore, 'with me can wanton, and laugh at the deluded world.

'*Smug.* How have I been deceived! then you are very 'great among the ladies.

'*Viz.* Yes, madam, they know that like a mole in the 'earth, I dig deep, but inviſible; not like thoſe flutter-'ing noiſy ſinners, whoſe pleaſure is the proclamation of 'their faults; thoſe empty flaſhes, who no ſooner kin-'dle, but they muſt blaze to alarm the world. But 'come, madam, you delay our pleaſures.

'*Smug.* He ſurely takes me for the lady *Lurewell*— 'ſhe has made him an appointment too—but I'll be re-'veng'd of both——Well, ſir, what are thoſe you are ſo 'intimate with?

'*Viz.* Come, come, madam, you know very well— 'thoſe who ſtand ſo high, that the vulgar envy even 'their crimes, whoſe figure adds privilege to their ſin, 'and makes it paſs unqueſtion'd: fair, high, pamper'd 'females, whoſe ſpeaking eyes, and piercing voice, 'would arm the ſtatue of a *Stoic*, and animate his cold 'marble with the ſoul of an *Epicure*, all raviſhing, love-'ly, and ſoft, and kind, like you.'

Smug. 'I'm very lovely and ſoft indeed! you ſhall 'find me much harder than you imagine, friend'—Well, ſir, but I ſuppoſe you've ſome other motive beſides plea-ſure?

Viz. Yes, madam, the honeſteſt motive in the world, intereſt—You muſt know, madam, that I have an old uncle, Alderman *Smuggler*, you have ſeen him, I ſup-poſe.

Smug. Yes, yes, I have ſome ſmall acquaintance with him.

Viz. 'Tis the moſt knaviſh, preciſe, covetous old rogue, that ever died of the gout.

Smug. Ah! The young ſon of a whore! [*Aſide.*] Well, ſir, and what of him?

Viz. Hell hungers not more for wretched ſouls, than he for ill-got pelf——and yet (what's wonderful) he that would ſtick at no profitable villainy himſelf, loves holineſs in another—'he prays all *Sundays* for the ſins 'of the week paſt——he ſpends all dinner-time in two 'tedious graces; and what he deſigns a bleſſing to the meat, proves a curſe to his family—he's the moſt—'

Smug. Well, well, ſir, I know him very well.

Viz.

Viz. Then, madam, he has a ſwinging eſtate, which I deſign to purchaſe as a ſaint, and ſpend like a gentleman. He got it by cheating, and ſhould loſe it by deceit. By the pretence of my zeal and ſobriety, I'll cozen the old miſer one of theſe days out of a ſettlement and deed of conveyance———

Smug. It ſhall be a deed to convey you to the gallows, then, ye young dog. [*Aſide.*

Viz. And no ſooner he's dead, but I'll rattle over his grave with a coach and ſix, to inform his covetous ghoſt how genteelly I ſpend his money.

Smug. I'll prevent you, boy, for I'll have my money bury'd with me. [*Aſide.*

Viz. Bleſs me, madam! here's a light coming this way. I muſt fly immediately; when ſhall I ſee you, madam.

Smug. Sooner than you expect, my dear.

Viz. Pardon me, dear madam, I would not be ſeen for the world. I would ſooner forfeit my life, nay my pleaſure, than my reputation. [*Exit.*

Smug. Reputation! Reputation! That poor word ſuffers a great deal.—Well! thou art the moſt accompliſh'd hypocrite that ever made a grave plodding face over a diſh of coffee and a pipe of tobacco! he owes me for ſeven years maintenance, and ſhall pay me by ſeven years impriſonment; and when I die, I'll leave him the fee-ſimple of a rope and a ſhilling. [*Exit.*] 'Who are 'theſe? I begin to be afraid of ſome miſchief—I wiſh 'that I were ſafe within the city liberties.——I'll hide 'myſelf. [*Stands cloſe.*

'*Enter* Butler, *with other Servants and Lights.*

'*But.* I ſay there are two ſpoons wanting, and I'll 'ſearch the whole houſe—Two ſpoons will be no ſmall 'gap in my quarter's wages.——

'*Serv.* When did you miſs 'em, *James*?

'*But.* Miſs them! why I miſs them now! in ſhort 'they muſt be among you, and if you don't return them, 'I'll go to the cunning-man to-morrow morning; my 'ſpoons I want, and my ſpoons I will have.'

'*Serv.*

'*Serv.* Come, come, ſearch about

'[*Search and diſcovers* Smuggler.

'*But.* Hark'e, good woman, what makes you hide 'yourſelf? What are you aſham'd of?

'*Smug.* Aſham'd of? O Lord, Sir, I'm an honeſt old 'woman that never was aſham'd of any thing.

'*But.* What are you, a midwife then? ſpeak, did 'not you ſee a couple of ſtray ſpoons in your travels!

'*Smug.* Stray ſpoons!

'*But.* Ay, ay, ſtray ſpoons; in ſhort you ſtole them, 'and I'll ſhake your old limbs to pieces, if you don't de-'liver them preſently.

'*Smug.* Bleſs me; a reverend elder of ſeventy years 'old accus'd for *Petty Larceny!*—Why ſearch me, good 'people, ſearch me; and if you find any ſpoons about 'me, you ſhall burn me for a witch.

'*But.* Ay, we will ſearch you, miſtreſs.

'[*They ſearch and pull the Spoons out of his pocket.*

'*Smug.* O the devil, the devil!

'*But.* Where, where is he? Lord bleſs us! ſhe is a 'witch in good earneſt, may be.

'*Smug.* Oh, it was ſome devil, ſome Covent-Garden 'or St. *James's* devil, that put them in my pocket.

'*But.* Ay, ay, you ſhall be hang'd for a thief, burnt 'for a witch, and then carted for a bawd. Speak what 'are you?

'*Enter* Lurewell.

'*Smug.* I'm the Lady *Lurewell's* nurſe.

'*Lure.* What noiſe is this?

'*But.* Here is an old *Succubus*, madam, that has ſtole 'two ſilver ſpoons, and ſays ſhe's your nurſe.

'*Lure.* My nurſe! O the impudent old jade, I never 'ſaw the wither'd creature before.

'*Smug.* Then I'm finely caught. O madam, madam, 'don't you know me? don't you remember buſs and 'guinea?

'*Lure.* Was ever ſuch impudence? I know thee! why 'thou'rt as brazen as a bawd in the ſide-box.—Take her 'before a juſtice, and then to *Newgate*, away.

'*Smug.* O! conſider, madam, that I'm an alderman.

'*Lure.*

'*Lure.* Conſider, Sir, that you're a compound of 'covetouſneſs, hypocriſy, and knavery, and muſt be 'puniſh'd accordingly——You muſt be in petticoats, 'gouty monſter, muſt ye! you muſt buſs and guinea 'too; you muſt tempt a lady's honour, old ſatyr; away 'with him.

'[*They hurry him off.*

'*Still may our ſex the frauds of men oppoſe,*
'*Still may our arts delude theſe tempting foes,*
'*May honour rule, and never fall betray'd,*
'*But Vice be caught in nets for virtue laid.*

'[Exit.'

ACT V.

SCENE, *Lady* Darling's *Houſe.*

Darling *and* Angelica.

Darl. DAughter, ſince you have to deal with a man of ſo peculiar a temper, you muſt not think the general arts of love can ſecure him; you may therefore allow ſuch a courtier ſome encouragement extraordinary, without reproach to your modeſty.

Ang. I am ſenſible, madam, that a formal nicety makes our modeſty ſit aukward, and appears rather a chain to enſlave, than bracelet to adorn us;—it ſhould ſhew, when unmoleſted, eaſy and innocent as a dove, but ſtrong and vigorous as a falcon when aſſaulted.

Darl. I'm afraid, daughter, you miſtake Sir *Harry's* gaiety for diſhonour.

Ang. Tho' modeſty, madam, may wink, it muſt not ſleep, when powerful enemies are abroad—I muſt confeſs, that of all men's, I wou'd not ſee Sir *Harry Wildair's* faults; nay, I cou'd wreſt his moſt ſuſpicious words a thouſand ways, to make them look like honour —But,

—But, madam, in ſpite of love, I muſt hate him, and curſe thoſe practices which taint our nobility, and rob all virtuous women of the braveſt men.———

Darl. You muſt certainly be miſtaken, *Angelica*; for I'm ſatisfy'd Sir *Harry's* deſigns are only to court, and marry you.

Ang. His pretence, perhaps, was ſuch; 'but women 'now, like enemies, are attack'd, whether by treache-'ry, or fairly conquer'd, the glory of the triumph is 'the ſame.'——Pray madam, by what means were you made acquainted with his deſigns?

Darl. Means, child! why, my couſin *Vizard*, who, I'm ſure, in your ſincere friend, ſent him. He brought me this letter from my couſin.———

[*Gives her the letter, which ſhe opens.*

Ang. Ha! *Vizard!* then I'm abus'd in earneſt.——Wou'd Sir *Harry*, by his inſtigation, fix a baſe affront upon me? no, I can't ſuſpect him of ſo ungenteel a crime.——This letter ſhall trace the truth——[*Aſide.*] My ſuſpicions, madam, are much clear'd; and I hope to ſatisfy your ladyſhip in my management, when next I ſee Sir *Harry*.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, here's a gentleman below calls himſelf *Wildair*.

Darl. Conduct him up. Daughter, I won't doubt your diſcretion. [*Exit* Darling.

Enter Wildair.

Wild. Oh, the delights of love and *Burgundy!*——Madam, I have toaſted your ladyſhip fifteen bumpers ſucceſſively, and ſwallow'd *Cupids* like *Loches* to every glaſs.

Ang. And what then, ſir?

Wild. Why then, madam, the wine has got into my head, and the *Cupids* into my heart; and unleſs by quenching quick my flame, you kindly eaſe the ſmart, I'm a loſt man, madam.

Ang. Drunkenneſs, Sir *Harry*, is the worſt pretence a gentleman can make for rudeneſs; for the excuſe is as ſcandalous as the fault.———Therefore, pray conſider who

who you are so free with, sir; a woman of condition, that can call half a dozen footmen upon occasion.

Wild. Nay, madam, if you have a mind to toss me in a blanket, half a dozen chamber-maids would do better service.——Come, come, madam, tho' the wine makes me lisp, yet it has taught me to speak plainer. By all the dust of my ancient progenitors, I must this night rest in your arms.

Ang. Nay then, who waits there? [*Enter Footmen.* Take hold of that madman, and bind him.

Wild. Nay, then *Burgundy's* the word, slaughter will ensue. Hold,—do you know, scoundrels, that I have been drinking victorious *Burgunay?* [*Draws.*

Servants. We know you're drunk, sir,

Wild. Then how have you the impudence, rascals, to assault a gentleman with a couple of flasks of courage in his head?

Servants. We must do as our young mistress commands us.

Wild. Nay, then have among ye, dogs.

[*Throws money amongst them; they scramble and take it up. He pelting them out, shuts the door and returns.*

Rascals, Poltroons,—I have charm'd the dragon, and now the fruit's my own.

Ang. O, the mercenary wretches! this was a plot to betray me.

Wild. I have put the whole army to flight: and now I'll take the general prisoner. [*Laying hold on her.*

Ang. I conjure you, sir, by the sacred name of honour, by your dead father's name, and the fair reputation of your mother's chastity, that you offer not the least offence—already you have wrong'd me past redress.

Wild. Thou art the most unaccountable creature.

Ang. What madness, Sir *Harry!* what wild dream of loose desire cou'd prompt you to attempt this baseness? View me well.——The brightness of my mind, methinks, should lighten outwards, and let you see your mistake in my behaviour. I think it shines with so much innocence in my face, that it should dazzle all your vicious thoughts: think not I am defenceless 'cause alone.

alone. Your very self is guard against yourself: I'm sure, there's something generous in your soul; my words shall snatch it out, and eyes shall fire it for my own defence.

Wild. [*Mimicking.*] Tal tidum, ti dum, tal ti didi, didum. A million to one now, but the girl is just come flush from reading the *Rival Queens*—'I gad, I'll at her in her own cant.

O *my* Statira, O *my angry dear, turn thy eyes on me,* behold thy beau in buskins.

Ang. Behold me, sir; view me with a sober thought, free from those fumes of wine that throw a mist before your sight, and you shall find that every glance from my reproaching eyes is arm'd with sharp resentment, and with a virtuous pride that looks dishonour dead.

Wild. This is the first whore in *Heroics* that I have met with. [*Aside.*] Look ye, madam, as to that slender particular of your virtue, we shan't quarrel about it; you may be as virtuous as any woman in *England,* if you please: you may say your prayers all the time:——but pray, madam, be pleas'd to consider what is this same virtue that you make such a mighty noise about: can your virtue bespeak you a front row in the boxes? No, for the players can't live upon virtue. Can your virtue keep you a coach and six? No, no; your virtuous woman walk on foot.——Can your virtue hire you a pew in the church? why, the very sexton will tell you, No. Can your virtue stake for you at picquet? No. Then, what business has a woman with virtue?——Come, come, madam, I offer'd you fifty guineas,——there's a hundred.—The devil! virtuous still! why, it is a hundred, five score, a hundred guineas.

Ang. O indignation! were I a man you durst not use me thus; but the mean, poor abuse you throw on me, reflects upon yourself; our sex still strikes an awe upon the brave, and only cowards dare affront a woman.

Wild. Affront! S'death, madam, a hundred guineas will set up a bank at Basset, a hundred guineas will furnish out your lodgings with china; a hundred guineas will give you an air of quality; a hundred guineas will buy you a rich Scrutoir for your *billet doux,* or a fine *Common-Prayer Book* for your virtue. A hundred guineas

guineas will buy a hundred fine things, and fine things are for fine ladies; and fine ladies are for fine gentlemen; and fine gentlemen are——'Egad, this *Burgundy* makes a man ſpeak like an angel——Come, come, madam, take it, and put it to what uſe you pleaſe.

Ang. I'll uſe it as I would uſe the baſe unworthy giver! thus! [*Throws down the purſe and ſtamps upon it.*

Wild. I have no mind to meddle in ſtate affairs; but theſe women will make me a Parliament man ſpite of my teeth, on purpoſe to bring in a bill againſt their extortion. She tramples under foot that deity which all the world adores.——O the blooming pride of beautiful eighteen! pſhaw, I'll talk to her no longer; I'll make my market with the old gentlewoman, ſhe knows buſineſs better.——[*Goes to the door*] Here, you, friend, pray deſire the old lady to walk in.——Heark'e, egad, madam, I'll tell your mother.

Enter Lady Darling.

Darl. Well, Sir *Harry*, and how d'ye like my daughter, pray?

Wild. Like her, madam!—Heark'e, will you take it? why faith madam!——take the money, I ſay, or egad, all's out.

Ang. All ſhall out; ſir, you're a ſcandal to the name of gentleman.

Wild. With all my heart, madam:—In ſhort, madam, your daughter has us'd me ſomewhat too familiarly, tho' I have treated her like a woman of quality.

Darl. How, ſir?

Wild. Why, madam, I have offer'd her a hundred guineas.

Darl. A hundred guineas! upon what ſcore?

Wild. Upon what ſcore! Lord, Lord, how theſe old women love to hear bawdy. Why, faith, madam, I have never a double *entendre* ready at preſent, but I'll ſing you a ſong.

Behold

Behold the goldfinches, tall al de rall,
And a man of my inches, tall al de rall,
You ſhall take um, believe me, tall al de rall,
If you will give me your – tall al de ral.

A modiſh minuet, madam, 'that's all.

Darl. Sir, I don't underſtand you.

Wild. Ay, ſhe will have it in plain terms; then, madam, in downright *Engliſh*, I offer'd your daughter a hundred guineas to———

Ang. Hold, ſir; ſtop your abuſive tongue, too looſe for modeſt ears to hear.—Madam, I did before ſuſpect that his deſigns were baſe, now they're too plain; this knight, this mighty man of wit and humour, is made a tool to a knave; *Vizard* has ſent him on a bully's errand to affront a woman; but I ſcorn the abuſe, and him that offer'd it,

Darl. How, ſir, come to affront us! d'ye know who we are, ſir?

Wild. Know who you are! why, your daughter there, is Mr. *Vizard's*—couſin, I ſuppoſe:——and for you, madam—now to call her procureſs A-la-mode de *France*, [*Aſide.*] *J'eſtime votre occupation*———

Darl. Pray, ſir, ſpeak *Engliſh*.

Wild. Then to define her office, A-la-mode de *Londres!* [*Aſide.*] I ſuppoſe your ladyſhip to be one of thoſe civil, obliging, diſcreet, old gentlewomen, who keep their viſiting days for the entertainment of their preſenting friends, whom they treat with imperial tea, a private room, and a pack of cards. Now I ſuppoſe you do underſtand me.

Darl. This is beyond ſufferance! but ſay, thou abuſive man, what injury have you ever receiv'd from me, or mine, thus to engage you in this ſcandalous aſperſion?

Ang. Yes, ſir, what cauſe, what motives could induce you thus to debaſe yourſelf below your rank?

Wild. Hey day! now dear *Roxana*, and you my fair *Statira*, be not ſo very heroic in your ſtiles; *Vizard's* letter may reſolve you, and anſwer all the impertinent queſtions you have made me.

Both Women. We appeal to that.

Wild.

Wild. And I'll ſtand to't; he read it to me, and the contents were pretty plain, I thought.

Ang. Here, ſir, peruſe it, and ſee how much we are injur'd, and you deceiv'd.

Wild. [*Opening the letter.*] But hold, madam, [To *Darling.*] before I read I'll make ſome condition:—Mr. *Vizard* ſays here, that I won't ſcruple 30 or 40 pieces. Now, madam, if you have clapt in another cypher to the account, and make it 3 or 4 hundred, egad I will not ſtand to't.

Ang. Now I can't tell whether diſdain or anger be the moſt juſt reſentment for this injury.

Darl. The letter, ſir, ſhall anſwer you.

Wild. Well then [*Reads.*]

Out of my earneſt inclination to ſerve your ladyſhip, and my couſin Angelica, Ay, ay, the very words I can ſay it by heart——*I have ſent Sir* Harry Wildair——*to*—What the devil's this? *ſent Sir* Harry Wildair *to court my couſin!*——He read to me quite a different thing.——*He's a gentleman of great parts and fortune*——He's a ſon of a whore and a raſcal——*And wou'd make your daughter very happy (Whiſtles) in a huſband. (Looks fooliſh, and hums a ſong.)* Oh, poor Sir *Harry*, what have the angry ſtars deſign'd?

Ang. Now, ſir, I hope you need no inſtigation to redreſs our wrongs, ſince even the injury points the way.

Darl. Think, ſir, that our blood for many generations, has run in the pureſt channel of unſully'd honour.

Wild. Ay, madam. [*Bows to her.*

Ang. Conſider what a tender flower is woman's reputation, which the leaſt air of foul detraction blaſts.

Wild. Yes madam. [*Bows to t'other.*

Darl. Call then to mind your rude and ſcandalous behaviour.

Wild. Right, madam. [*Bows again.*

Ang. Remember the baſe price you offer'd me. [*Exit.*

Wild. Very true, madam; was ever man ſo catechiz'd?

Darl.

Darl. Then think that *Vizard*, villain *Vizard*, caus'd all this, yet lives: that's all; farewell.

Wild. Stay, madam, [*To* Darling] one word; is there no other way to redreſs your wrongs, but by fighting?

Darl. Only one, ſir, which if you can think of, you may do; you know the buſineſs I entertain'd you for.

Wild. I underſtand you, madam. [*Exit* Darling.] Here am I brought to a very pretty dilemma, I muſt commit murder, or commit matrimony; which is beſt now? a licenſe from *Doctors Commons*, or a ſentence from the *Old Bailey*? If I kill my man, the law hangs me: if I marry my woman, I ſhall hang myſelf.—— But, damn it.—Cowards dare fight; I'll marry, that's the moſt daring action of the two: ſo my dear couſin *Angelica*, have at you. [*Exit.*

SCENE *Newgate.* Clincher ſenior, *ſolus.*

Clin. ſen. How ſevere and melancholy are *Newgate* reflections! Laſt week my father died; yeſterday I turn'd beau; to-day I am laid by the heels, and to-morrow ſhall be hung by the neck——I was agreeing with a bookſeller about printing an account of my journey through *France* and *Italy*; but now the hiſtory of my travels muſt be thro' *Holborn* to *Tyburn*—*The laſt and dying ſpeech of* Beau Clincher, *that was going to the* Jubilee—— *Come a half-penny a-piece.* A ſad ſound, a ſad ſound, faith! 'tis one way to have a man's death make a great noiſe in the world.

Enter Smuggler *and* Gaoler.

Smug. Well, friend, I have told you who I am: ſo ſend theſe letters into *Thames Street*, as directed; they are to gentlemen that will bail me. [Exit *Gaoler.*] Eh! this *Newgate* is a very populous place: here's robbery and repentance in every corner.——Well, friend, what are you? a cut-throat or a bum-bailiff?

Clin. ſen. What are you, miſtreſs? a bawd or a witch? heark'e, if you are a witch, d'ye ſee, I'll give you a hundred pounds to mount me on a broom-ſtaff, and whip me away to the *Jubilee.*

Smug.

Smug. The *Jubilee!* O, you young rake-hell, what brought you here?

Clin. sen. Ah, you old rogue, what brought you here, if you go to that?

Smug. I knew, sir, what your powdering, your prinking, your dancing, and your frisking, would come to.

Clin. sen. And I knew what your cozening, your extortion, and your smuggling wou'd come to.

Smug. Ay, sir, you must break your indentures, and run to the devil in a full bottom wig, must you?

Clin. sen. Ay, sir, you must put off your gravity, and run to the devil in petticoats:—you design to swing in masquerade, master, d'ye?

Smug. Ay, you must go to the plays too, sirrah: Lord, Lord! what business has a 'prentice at a Play-house, unless it be to hear his master made a cuckold, and his mistress a whore? It is ten to one now, but some malicious poet has my character upon the stage within this month: 'tis a hard matter now, that an honest sober man can't sin in private for this plaguy stage, I gave an honest gentleman five guineas myself towards writing a book against it: and it has done no good, we see.

Clin. sen. Well, well, master, take courage! our comfort is, we have liv'd together, and shall die together, only with this difference, that I have liv'd like a fool, and shall die like a knave; and you have liv'd like a knave, and shall die like a fool.

Smug. No, sirrah! I have sent a messenger for my cloaths, and shall get out immediately, and shall be upon your jury by and by.—Go to prayers, you rogue, to prayers. [*Exit.*

Clin. sen. Prayers! it is a hard taking when a man must say grace to the gallows.—Ah, this cursed intriguing! had I swung handsomely in a silken garter now, I had died in my duty; but to hang in hemp, like the vulgar, it is very ungenteel.

Enter Tom Errand.

A reprieve! a reprieve! thou dear, dear——damn'd rogue. Where have you been? thou art the most welcome—Son of whore; where's my cloaths?

Err.

Err. Sir, I see where mine are: come, sir, strip, sir, strip.

Clin. sen. What, sir, will you abuse a gentleman?

Err. A gentleman! ha, ha, ha! d'ye know where you are, sir? we're all gentlemen here.——I stand up for liberty and property.—*Newgate's* a common wealth. No courtier has business among us; come, sir.

Clin. sen. Well, but stay, stay, till I send for my own cloaths: I shall get out presently.

Err. No, no, sir! I'll ha' you into the dungeon, and uncase you.

Clin. sen. Sir, you can't master me; for I'm twenty thousand strong. [Exeunt *struggling*,

SCENE, *Changes to Lady* Darling's *House.*

Enter Wildair *with letters, Servants following.*

Wild. Here, fly all around, and bear these as directed; you to *Westminster*,—you to St. *James's*, and you into the city.—Tell all my friends, a bridegroom's joy invites their presence. Look all of ye like bridegrooms also: all appear with hospitable looks, and bear a welcome in your faces.——Tell 'em I'm marry'd. If any ask to whom, make no reply; but tell 'em that I'm marry'd, that joy shall crown the day, and love the night. Be gone, fly.

Enter Standard.

A thousand welcomes, friend; my pleasure's now complete, since I can share it with my friend: brisk joy shall bound from me to you; then back again; and, like the sun, grows warmer by reflection.

Stand. You're always pleasant, Sir *Harry*; but this transcends yourself: whence proceeds it?

Wild. Canst thou not guess, my friend? whence flows all earthly joy? what is the life of man, and soul of pleasure?—*Woman*——What fires the heart with transport, and the soul with raptures? *Lovely woman*——What is the master-stroke and smile of the creation, but *charming virtuous woman?* — When nature in the general composition, first brought woman forth, like a flush'd

flush'd poet, ravish'd with his fancy, with ecstacy it blest the fair production!—methinks, my friend, you relish not my joy. What is the cause?

Stand. Canst thou not guess.—What is the bane of man, and scourge of life, but *woman?*—What is the heathenish idol man sets up, and is damn'd for worshiping? *Treacherous woman.*—What are those, whose eyes, like basilisks, shine beautiful for sure destruction, whose smiles are dangerous as the grin of fiends, but *false deluding woman?*—Woman! whose composition inverts humanity; their bodies heavenly; but their souls are clay.

Wild. Come, come, colonel, this is too much; I know your wrongs receiv'd from *Lurewell* may excuse your resentments against her. But it is unpardonable to charge the failings of a single woman upon the whole sex.——I have found one, whose virtues———

Stand. So have I, Sir *Harry*; I have found one whose pride's above yielding to a prince. And if lying, dissembling, perjury and falshood, be no breaches in a woman's honour, she's as innocent as infancy.

Wild. Well, colonel, I find your opinion grows stronger by opposition; I shall now therefore wave the argument, and only beg you for this day to make a shew of complaisance at least.—Here comes my charming bride.

Enter Darling *and* Angelica.

Stand. [Saluting *Angelica.*] I wish you, madam, all the joys of love and fortune.

Enter Clincher junior.

Clin. jun. Gentlemen and ladies, I'm just upon the spur, and have only a minute to take my leave.

Wild. Whither are you bound, sir?

Clin. jun. Bound, sir! I'm going to the *Jubilee*, sir.

Darl. Bless me, cousin! how came you by these cloaths?

Clin. jun. Cloaths! ha, ha, ha! the rarest jest! ha, ha, ha! I shall burst, by *Jupiter Ammon*, I shall burst!

Darl. What's the matter, cousin?

Clin. jun. The matter! ha, ha, ha! why, an honest porter, ha, ha, ha! has knock'd out my brother's brains, ha, ha, ha!

Wild. A very good jeſt, I'faith, ha, ha, ha!

Clin. jun. Ay, ſir, but the jeſt of all is, he knock'd out his brains with a hammer, and ſo he is as dead as a door-nail, ha, ha, ha!

Darl. And do you laugh, wretch?

Clin. jun. Laugh! ha, ha, ha! let me ſee e'er a younger brother in *England* that won't laugh at ſuch a jeſt.

Ang. You appeared a very ſober pious gentleman ſome hours ago.

Clin. jun. Pſhaw, I was a fool then: but now, madam, I'm a wit; I can rake now.—As for your part, madam, you might have had me once!—But now, madam, if you ſhould fall to eating chalk, or gnawing the ſheets, it is none of my fault,—Now, madam—I have got an eſtate, and I muſt go to the *Jubilee*.

Enter Clincher ſenior *in a blanket*.

Clin. ſen. Muſt you ſo, rogue, muſt ye! You will go to the *Jubilee*, will you?

Clin. jun. A ghoſt, a ghoſt!—Send for the dean and chapter preſently.

Clin. ſen. A ghoſt! No, no, ſirrah, I'm an elder brother, rogue.

Clin. jun. I don't care a farthing for that; I'm ſure you're dead in law.

Clin. ſen. Why ſo, ſirrah; why ſo?

Clin. jun. Becauſe, ſir, I can get a fellow to ſwear he knock'd out your brains.

Wild. An odd way of ſwearing a man out of his life?

Clin. jun. Smell him, gentlemen, he has a deadly ſcent about him. ———

Clin. ſen. Truly the apprehenſions of death may have made me ſavour a little—O Lord,—the colonel! the apprehenſions of him may make the ſavour worſe, I'm afraid.

Clin. jun. In ſhort, ſir, were you a ghoſt, or brother or devil, I will go to the *Jubilee*, by *Jupiter Ammon*.

Stand. Go to the *Jubilee*, go the *Bear-Garden*,—the travel of ſuch fools as you doubly injures our country; you expoſe our native follies, which ridicule us among ſtrangers, and return fraught only with their vices, which you vend here for faſhionable gallantry; a travel-

ling

ling fool is as dangerous as a home-bred villain—Get you to your native plough and cart, converſe with animals like yourſelves, ſheep and oxen; men are creatures you don't underſtand.

Wild. Let 'em alone, colonel, their folly will be now diverting. Come, gentlemen, we'll diſpute this point ſome other time; I hear ſome fiddles tuning, let's hear how they can entertain us.

A Servant enters and whiſpers Wildair.

Madam, ſhall I beg you to entertain the company in the next room for a moment: [*To* Darling.

Darl. With all my heart—Come, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt omnes but* Wildair.

Wild. A lady to enquire for me! who can this be?

Enter Lurewell.

O! madam, this favour is beyond my expectation, to come uninvited to dance at my wedding—What d'ye gaze at, madam?

Lure. A monſter—if thou'rt marry'd, thou'rt the moſt perjur'd wretch that e'er avouch'd deceit.

Wild. Hey dey! why, madam, I'm ſure I never ſwore to marry you: I made indeed a ſlight promiſe, upon condition of your granting me a ſmall favour, but you would not conſent you know.

Lure. How he upbraids me with my ſhame.—Can you deny your binding vows when this appears a witneſs 'gainſt your falſhood. [*Shews a ring.*] Methinks the motto of this ſacred pledge ſhou'd flaſh confuſion in your guilty face—Read, read here the binding words of love and honour, words not unknown to your perfidious tongue,—tho' utter ſtrangers to your treacherous heart.

Wild. The woman's ſtark ſtaring mad, that's certain.

Lure. Was it maliciouſly deſign'd to let me find my miſery when paſt redreſs; to let me know you, only to know you falſe?—Had not curſed chance ſhew'd me the ſurprizing motto, I had been happy—The firſt knowledge I had of you was fatal to me, and this ſecond worſe.

Wild. What the devil is all this!—madam, I'm not at leiſure for raillery at preſent, I have weighty affairs upon my hands; the buſineſs of pleaſure, madam; any other time. [*Going*

Lure. Stay, I conjure you ſtay.

Wild. Faith I can't, my bride expects me; but hark'e, when the honey-moon is over, about a month or two hence, I may do you a ſmall favour. [*Exit.*

Lure. Grant me ſome wild expreſſions, Heavens, or I ſhall burſt—Woman's weakneſs, man's falſhood, my own ſhame, and love's diſdain, at once ſwell up my breaſt———Words, words, or I ſhall burſt. [*Going.*

Enter Standard.

Stand. Stay, madam, you need not ſhun my ſight; for if you are a perfect woman, you have confidence to outface a crime, and bear the charge of guilt without a bluſh.

Lure. The charge of guilt! What? making a fool of you? I've don't, and glory in the act; 'the height of 'female juſtice were to make you all hang or drown;' diſſembling to the prejudice of men is virtue; and every look, or ſign, or ſmile, or tear that can deceive, is meritorious.

Stand. Very pretty principles truly—if there be truth in woman, 'tis now in thee—Come, madam, you know that you're diſcovered, and being ſenſible you can't eſcape, you wou'd now turn to bay.

That Ring, madam, proclaims you guilty.

Lure. O monſter, villain perfidious villain! has he told you?

Stand. I'll tell it you, and loudly too.

Lure. O name it not—yet, ſpeak it out, 'tis ſo juſt a puniſhment for putting faith in man, that I will bear it all; 'and let credulous maids, that truſt their honour 'to the tongues of men, that hear their ſhame pro-'claim'd.'—Speak now, what his buſy ſcandal, and your improving malice both dare utter.

Stand. Your falſhood can't be reach'd by malice nor by ſatire; your actions are the juſteſt libel on your fame—your words, your looks, your tears, I did believe in ſpite of common fame. Nay, 'gainſt mine own eyes, I ſtill maintain'd your truth. I imagin'd *Wildair's* boaſting of your favours to be the pure reſult of his own vanity: at laſt he urg'd your taking preſents of him, as a convincing proof of which you yeſterday from him receiv'd

ceiv'd that ring, which ring, that I might be ſure he gave it, I lent it him for that purpoſe!

Lure. Ha! You lent it him for that purpoſe!

Stand. Yes, yes, madam, I lent it him for that purpoſe—no denying it—I know it well, for I have worn it long, and deſire you now, madam, to reſtore it to the juſt owner.

Lure. The juſt owner! think, ſir, think but of what importance 'tis to own it; if you have love and honour in your ſoul, 'tis then moſt juſtly yours; if not, you are a robber, and have ſtol'n it baſely.

Stand. Ha!—your words, like meeting flints, have ſtruck a light to ſhew me ſomething ſtrange—but tell me inſtantly, is not your real name *Manly?*

Lure. Anſwer me firſt; did not you receive this ring about twelve years ago?

Stand. I did.

Lure. And were not you about that time entertain'd two nights at the houſe of Sir *Oliver Manly in Oxfordſhire?*

Stand. I was, I was: [*Runs to her and embraces her.*] The bleſt remembrance fires my ſoul with tranſport—I know the reſt—you are the charming ſhe, and I the happy man.

Lure. How has blind fortune ſtumbled on the right! but where have you wander'd ſince?—'twas cruel to forſake me.

Stand. The particulars of my fortune are too tedious now; but to diſcharge myſelf from the ſtain of diſhonour, I muſt tell you, that immediately upon my return to the univerſity, my elder brother and I quarrell'd: my father, to prevent further miſchief, poſts me away to travel: I writ to you from *London*, but fear the letter came not to your hands.

Lure. I never had the leaſt account of you by letter or otherwiſe.

Stand. Three years I liv'd abroad, and at my return, found you were gone out of the kingdom, tho' none could tell me whither: miſſing you thus, I went to *Flanders*, ſerv'd my king till the peace commenc'd; then fortunately going on board at *Amſterdam*, one ſhip tranſported us both to *England*. At the firſt ſight I lov'd, tho'

tho' ignorant of the hidden cauſe—You may remember, madam, that talking once of marriage, I told you I was engaged; to your dear ſelf I meant.

Lure. Then men are ſtill moſt generous and brave—and to reward your truth, an eſtate of three thouſand pounds a year waits your acceptance; and if I can ſatisfy you in my paſt conduct, 'and the reaſons that engag'd me to deceive all men,' I ſhall expect the honourable performance of your promiſe, and that you will ſtay with me in *England*.

Stand. Stay! nor fame, nor glory, e'er ſhall part us more. 'My honour can be no where more concerned than here.'

Enter Wildair, Angelica, *and both* Clinchers.

Oh! Sir *Harry*, fortune has acted miracles to day; the ſtory's ſtrange and tedious, but all amounts to this, that woman's mind is charming as her perſon, and I am made a convert too to beauty.

Wild. I wanted only this to make my pleaſure perfect. And now, madam, we may dance and ſing, and love and kiſs in good earneſt.———

A dance here. After the dance, enter Smuggler.

Smug. So, gentlemen and ladies, I'm glad to find you ſo merry; is my nephew gracious among ye?

Wild. Sir, he dares not ſhew his face among ſuch honourable company, for your gracious nephew is——

Smug. What, ſir? have a care what you ſay.

Wild. A villain, ſir.

Smug. With all my heart—I'll pardon you the beating me for that very word. And pray, Sir *Harry* when you ſee him next, tell him this news from me, that I have diſinherited him, that I will leave him as poor as a diſbanded quarter-maſter. And this is the poſitive and ſtiff reſolution of threeſcore and ten; an age that ſticks as obſtinately to its purpoſe, as to the old faſhion of its cloak.

Wild. You ſee, madam, [*To* Angel.] how induſtriouſly fortune has puniſh'd his offence to you.

Ang. I can ſcarcely, ſir, reckon it an offence, conſidering the happy conſequence of it.

Smug. O! Sir *Harry*, he is as hypocritical——

Lure.

Lure. As yourself, Mr. Alderman. How fares my good old nurse, pray sir?

Smug. O madam, I shall be even with you before I part with your writings and money, that I have in my hands.

Stand. A word with you, Mr. Alderman; do you know this pocket-book?

Smug. O Lord, it contains an account of all my secret practices in trading [*Aside.*] How came you by it, sir?

Stand. Sir *Harry* here dusted it out of your pocket, at this lady's house yesterday; it contains an account of some secret practices in your merchandizing; among the rest, the counterpart of an agreement with a correspondent at *Bourdeaux*, about transporting *French* wine in *Spanish* casks——First return this lady all her writings, then I shall consider whether I shall lay your proceedings before the Parliament or not, whose justice will never suffer your smuggling to go unpunish'd.

Smug. O my poor ship and cargo!

Clin. sen. Hark'e, master, you had as good come along with me to the *Jubilee* now.

Ang. Come, Mr. Alderman, for once let a woman advise; wou'd you be thought an honest man, banish covetousness, that worst gout of age: avarice is a poor pilfering quality of the soul, and will as certainly cheat, as a thief wou'd steal—Wou'd you be thought a reformer of the times, be less severe in your censures, less rigid in your precepts, and more strict in your example.

Wild. Right, madam, virtue flows freer from imitation, than compulsion; of which, colonel, your conversion and mine are just examples.

In vain are musty morals taught in schools,
By rigid teachers, and as rigid rules,
Where virtue with a frowning aspect stands,
And frights the pupil from its rough commands.
But woman ———
Charming women can true converts make,
We love the precepts for the teacher's sake,
Virtue in them appears so bright, so gay,
We hear with transport, and with pride obey.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

NOW all depart each his respective Way,
To spend an Evening's Chat upon the Play;
Some to Hippolito's; *one homeward goes,*
And one with loving she retires to th' Rose.
The am'rous Pair in all Things frank and free,
Perhaps may save the Play in Number Three.
The tearing Spark, of Phyllis *ought gain says,*
Breaks th' Drawer's Head, kicks her, and murders Bays.
To Coffee, *some retreat to save their Pockets,*
Others, more generous, damn the Play at Locket's;
But there, I hope, the Author's Fears are vain,
Malice ne'er spoke in generous Champaign.
That Poet merits an ignoble Death,
Who fears to fall over a brave Monteth.
The Privilege of Wine we only ask,
You'll taste again, before you damn the Flask.
Our Author fears not you; but those he may,
Who in cold Blood murder a man in Tea.
Those Men of Spleen, who fond the World should know it:
Sit down, and for their Two-pence *damn a Poet.*
Their Criticism's good, that we can say for't,
They understand a Play—too well to pay for't.
From Box to Stage, from Stage to Box they run,
First steal the Play, then damn it when they've done.
But now, to know what Fate may us betide,
Among our Friends in Cornhill *and* Cheapside.
But those I think, have but one Rule for Plays;
They'll say they're good, if so the world but says.
If it should please them, and their Spouses know it;
They strait enquire what Kind of Man's the Poet.
But from Side-box we dread a fearful Doom,
All the good-natur'd Beaux are gone to Rome.
The Ladies Censure I'd almost forgot,
Then for a Line or two t'engage their Vote:
But that Way's odd, below our Author's Aim,
No less than his whole Play is Compliment to them,
For their Sakes then the Play can't miss succeeding,
Tho' Critics may want Wit, they have good Breeding;
They won't, I'm sure, forfeit the Ladies Graces,
By shewing their Ill-nature to their Faces;
Our Business with good Manners may be done,
Flatter us here, and damn us when you're gone.

FINIS.

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